2

Soviet Literature

2

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
PRINTED IN THE SOVIET UNION
1947

CONSTANTINE SIMONOV

THE RUSSIAN QUESTION

A Play in Three Acts

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MACPHERSON — owner and editor of a large New York paper and part owner of a number of other papers; sixty years of age, but looks much younger.

GOULD — part owner of a large newspaper in San Francisco and also one of the editors of Macpherson's paper; about forty years of age. Limps slightly. Rough in his manner, playing "the man of the people."

SMITH — correspondent of Macpherson's paper, the same age as Gould, and his old schoolmate.

PRESTON — editor of the foreign department of Macpherson's paper; forty-five years of age.

HARDY — reporter on Macpherson's paper; forty years of age.

MURPHY — correspondent of one of the Hearst papers; forty-six years of age. Careless in his dress. Never completely drunk, but always slightly intoxicated.

KESSLER — publisher. A stout old man who suffers from asthma.

WILLIAMS — editor of a Left liberal paper, nearing his fifties.

JESSIE — pretty woman of thirty-three who looks younger.

MEG STANLEY — stenographer; somewhere between thirty and forty.

BARMAN, TAXI DRIVER, SECRETARY, FURNITURE PACKERS.

Place—New York.

Time—winter, spring 1946.

ACT I

SCENE I

Macpherson's private office, in his newspaper's building. A large room, with little furniture—a desk, several armchairs. Only ornament—photographs hanging in a row above the oak panelling that lines the lower part of the walls. Over the desk—a huge photograph of an old two-story house.

Enter Jessie, comes to the table, takes papers and newspaper galleys from a folder and arranges them on the desk. The telephone rings.

JESSIE (*at the telephone*): Hello. . . No. He'll be back in a quarter of an hour.

(*A knock at the door.*)

JESSIE: Come in.

GOULD (*entering*): You here? What an unpleasant surprise.

JESSIE: Unpleasant—why?

GOULD: Back from the army and everything just the same as it was in '41.

JESSIE: I'm just pinchhitting for Miss Bridge. She's gone on her vacation.

GOULD: Relations strictly business with the chief?

JESSIE: Strictly business.

GOULD: H'm—he's getting old, all right.

JESSIE: So am I.

GOULD: I wouldn't say so. We left the Philippines last February—so it's only a year.

JESSIE: Yes.

GOULD: But all the same, you look better in a dress than in a WAC uniform.

JESSIE: Maybe.

GOULD: What about a kiss—for old times' sake?

JESSIE: No.

GOULD: O.K. When do you quit?

JESSIE: At ten.

GOULD: The Bromley Club at eleven, O.K.?

JESSIE: No. I'm busy.

GOULD: May I ask, with whom?

JESSIE: You may. I think that Harry. . . .

GOULD: Harry Smith?

JESSIE: Yes. I think Harry's going to ask me to supper tonight.

GOULD: But he only flew in from Japan last night!

JESSIE: Yes, I know. I met him at the airport.

GOULD: Office sent you?

JESSIE: No. (*A pause.*) They say your wife's not very pretty.

GOULD: She isn't.

JESSIE: And so rich that private detectives keep her informed of what you're doing.

GOULD: Possible.

JESSIE: Did you finally buy that San Francisco paper?

GOULD: Not quite. Forty per cent so far. You know, it's God's truth, when I got married I was really sorry that it was she that was rich and not you.

JESSIE: I believe you. Is she very unattractive?

GOULD: Very.

JESSIE: You've got my sympathy.

GOULD: I believe you. Where's the chief?

JESSIE: At a lunch for the Russian newspapermen. He'll be here in ten minutes.

GOULD: So, Harry. . . May I smoke?

JESSIE: Of course.

GOULD (*lighting a cigar*): Only flew in last night. Fast work.

JESSIE: Not so fast. We met in Tokyo.

GOULD: Ah . . . that's right. I'm getting thick. Does he know about me?

JESSIE: No. I never thought of you when he was there. And in general.

GOULD: Other people might tell him.

JESSIE: Not very likely. He doesn't like that sort of talk.

GOULD: But he loves you?

JESSIE: I think so.

GOULD: And you? Only tell the truth. In '41 you liked him less than you did me.

JESSIE: That's right. But now I like him much better than you. And then I've got older and wiser. And I want to get married.

GOULD: The chief wants to send him to Russia.

JESSIE: Yes, I know. I typed the draft contract for Harry's book yesterday. I guess you had a finger in that pie.

GOULD: Yes, it was my idea. And my draft.

JESSIE: Well—I guess that'll take Harry away for three months.

GOULD: About that. That is—if he goes.

JESSIE: He'll go, all right.

GOULD: Of course. Last year he began to lose ground. If he doesn't do something to jack up his reputation, and do it quick he won't be making more than five hundred a month soon. And I'm afraid that wouldn't look much like a happy marriage for you.

JESSIE: He'll go.

GOULD: I'm not so sure of it. He used to have some goofy ideas of his own about Russia.

JESSIE: I'm not bothering about his ideas or the Russians, or what he writes about them. I want my own home, my own children and a little happiness for myself. I'm sick of being somebody's baby doll. He'll go.

GOULD: When did you get the idea of marrying him? In Japan?

JESSIE: Just about.

GOULD: And clinched it?

JESSIE: Yesterday.

GOULD: When you were typing my draft contract for his book? Looks as though I've got the silly part of marriage broker.

JESSIE: Looks like it. But why silly?

GOULD: Well, after all. Nearly three years we. . . You ought to be grateful to me.

JESSIE: I am.

GOULD: Cigarette?

JESSIE: I've stopped smoking. Harry doesn't like it.

GOULD: Oh, then it really *is* serious.

JESSIE: Yes. It's very serious.

MACPHERSON (*entering*): How do, Jack.

GOULD: Glad to see you, Mr. Macpherson.

MACPHERSON: Same old thing again!

GOULD: All right, Charlie, then; only admit that it's not just because you're naturally democratic that you like people to call you "Charlie".

MACPHERSON: Is that so?

GOULD: Yes. You're just trying to be young. "Charlie" sounds younger than "Mr. Macpherson." Right?

MACPHERSON: Maybe. But you don't have to say it when ladies are present.

JESSIE: May I go?

MACPHERSON: Yes. You can do anything you wish. She's leaving, Jack, doesn't want to work for me.

JESSIE (*at the door*): Mr. Macpherson, I've explained to you. . . .

MACPHERSON (*interrupting*): Yes. You don't need to explain it a second time. Run along, Jessie.

(*Exit Jessie.*)

MACPHERSON: I'm getting old, Jack. Yesterday I suggested that when Miss Bridge comes back, Jessie could change places with her and stay with me. Like it used to be. . . No. She likes the City desk better. I'm getting old. . . Smith'll be here in a quarter of an hour.

GOULD: Well, how were the Russians?

MACPHERSON: The newspapermen? I quite forgot them. (*Into the telephone.*) Mike! Send me Hardy, and in five minutes—Preston. (*To Gould*). Well, they've got heads on their shoulders. (*Laughs.*) At lunch they replied to a hundred impolite questions of ours with a hundred very polite jabs. And when we got up, they asked Bill Crosby, who was host, to allow them to shoot one more parting question—what did he consider to be the difference between a lunch and a press conference? Crosby was on the spot, alright.

(*Enter Hardy.*)

MACPHERSON: Hardy, when you go to the Russians' last press conference tomorrow, get in one last question—are the rumours true that they brought money with them to finance our coal strike?

HARDY: But. . . .

MACPHERSON: What?

HARDY: They'll only shrug their shoulders.

MACPHERSON: Of course. And you'll write that the only reply the Russians could give was an embarrassed shrug, or something of that sort. It's your job to dope it out. That's all.

HARDY: O.K. (*Exit.*)

GOULD: Isn't that a bit too obvious for a serious paper?

MACPHERSON: Doesn't matter. Everybody knows Hardy's a mudslinger. It'll sound quite natural coming from him.

GOULD: Maybe you're right. . . .

MACPHERSON: You mean I'm not quite gaga yet?

GOULD: Not quite.

MACPHERSON: What d'ye mean, not quite?

GOULD: I mean, that wasn't quite what I wanted to say. It's that you're taking a firmer stand every day. I like that.

MACPHERSON: So do I. And I think I like it even more than you. (*Slams his hand on the desk.*) A fine old-fashioned desk. Even for a man playing along new lines, it's pleasant to sit at an old-fashioned desk like this. Right?

GOULD: Sure.

MACPHERSON: Yes . . . sure. But unfortunately, you'll have to wait. Unfortunately it was I, and not you who started this job thirty years ago in that old wreck (*pointing to the photograph of the house over the table*). Too bad. The sacred right of private property.

GOULD (*walking round the office*): Aha, an old friend come to light again.

MACPHERSON (*approaching and looking at a photograph of Mussolini*): Yes. Well, what about it? Ever since the poor devil was hanged head down in Milan, he's most certainly been dead. Speak no ill of the dead. He autographed it when I was in his Rome palace in '33. Look at that autograph. One of the best in my collection.

GOULD: And the other gentleman? Still in the safe?

MACPHERSON: For the present. There are rumours that he's still alive. Too early to hang him yet.

GOULD: I think you'd be quite safe. . . .

MACPHERSON: No, it's still too early.

GOULD: You're too much afraid of the future. That's the trouble with you.

PRESTON (*entering*): Here I am. How are you? Hello, Jack.

GOULD: Hello.

MACPHERSON: What have you got about Russia today, Bill?

PRESTON: U. P. gave us fifty lines by Harner on the *Russians in Vienna*. Harner praises the Russians. Don't know whether to use it or not.

MACPHERSON: Sure we'll use it. Unlike Hearst, we keep our information objective. Put it on page sixteen. No closer. What else?

PRESTON: Wippman's article on Russian expansionist plans and five or six more items of that sort.

MACPHERSON: Give it all. We're objective. Put Wippman on the front page, the rest no further than the sixth. What else?

PRESTON: What else? A crazy Italian report about Russian aircraft over Eritrea. But that's just crap.

MACPHERSON: Headline it on page one.

PRESTON: But the Russians'll deny it tomorrow.

MACPHERSON: Well, what if they do? We'll put it on page twenty. Five lines. They always write short denials. Millions of people'll read the report, and ten thousand the denial.

PRESTON: I don't like this business.

MACPHERSON: What's that?

PRESTON: You're interfering with the work of my department. I'm used to running my own show.

MACPHERSON: Sorry. You're right, Bill, and I'm very sorry. But you don't seem to get me these days.

PRESTON: I got you all right a month ago. You've changed in this month.

MACPHERSON: Of course I have. You'll have to understand that. Well, so long.

PRESTON: Goodbye. (*Exit.*)

GOULD: Smith'll be along in three minutes.

MACPHERSON: Yes. Well, I guess he'll just have to fall in line. Thirty thousand for a series of articles and a book with a guaranteed sale. I tell you, if I didn't need it so badly before the congressional elections, I wouldn't pay him a cent over fifteen. He'll agree. Things are pretty bad with him. He hasn't written anything for nearly a year and hasn't made a dollar.

GOULD: Why hasn't he been writing?

MACPHERSON: I got two letters from him—from Okinawa in Japan. Post-war lunacy. He thought that as soon as peace was signed, there'd be cooing doves and blooming roses everywhere. But the world's the same it always was. And that just drove him nuts. He told me he couldn't write anything till he understood what was going on in the world. To hell with that anyway—he'll go.

GOULD: He's thinking of marrying Jessie.

MACPHERSON: So that's it? Now I understand. Well, it's a pity but it's a good thing at the same time. He'll go all right. Jessie's not the right girl for love in a shack.

SMITH (*entering*): How do you do, Chief, 'lo, Jack. (*Shakes hands.*)

MACPHERSON: Sit down, Harry.

SMITH: There. But if you don't mind my asking—what's all the hurry about? I got a shaking over the Pacific that's turned my guts inside out.

MACPHERSON: And I'm afraid that now you'll have to take a shaking over the Atlantic.

SMITH: What do you want me to do?

MACPHERSON: Russia.

SMITH: Russia? . . You know, I've been having insomnia this last month and for the first time in my life, I started reading our worthy paper nights. Judging by your new political line, I guess there's not much sense in picking me for Russia.

MACPHERSON: First of all, thanks for reading my paper at last. And secondly, I've decided that considering my new line, it's precisely you that I want to send to Russia.

SMITH: You're getting me mixed up with Jack, Chief.

GOULD: Don't be a fool. After the books I wrote about Russia, they would be idiots to let me in again. And unfortunately, they're not idiots.

SMITH: But after the book I wrote about Russia, only an idiot could advise the chief to send *me* of all people to Russia now, considering his new line.

GOULD: Thanks. But you've got it all balled up, as usual. I'll just show you why it's not I, but you, who's the idiot.

SMITH (*settling himself comfortably in his armchair*): That's interesting. It's something I've been wondering about all my life. The fact's plain enough, but the reason's not very clear.

GOULD: You're an idiot because you don't know anything about dialectics. Dialectics is a science showing how everything constantly moves and changes. . . .

SMITH (*interrupting*): Splendid. I never acquired wisdom so quickly in my life.

GOULD (*continuing*): So you see, if you approach the question dialectically. . . (*Smith takes out a notebook and writes something.*) What are you doing?

SMITH: Taking it down: "Dialectically."

MACPHERSON (*reproachfully*): Harry!

SMITH: Don't be angry, Chief. That's all. I'm all attention.

GOULD (*continuing*): . . . then your 1942 book praising Russia ought to help you to write quite a different book about Russia now. The kind of book *we* need.

SMITH: Who d'ye mean by "we"?

MACPHERSON: People who think we don't need Communism in America.

SMITH: I'm one of them. Live and let live—the Russians have their own ways, we have ours. Well, what next?

GOULD: Next is that you should go to Russia again and write the whole truth about it.

SMITH: But I wrote the whole truth then.

GOULD: No.

SMITH: Hey! Take it easy!

GOULD: What did you write? That the Russians are brave soldiers, that they held Stalingrad heroically, that their airmen rammed the Germans, that their women were snipers. And are you going to tell me that that's the whole truth about Russia?

SMITH: Everything that I wrote was the truth.

GOULD: And it has not occurred to you that now, when those brave soldiers have got to the heart of Europe and Korea, when those airmen are flying over Vienna and Port Arthur, that this truth isn't turned against the Germans any more, but against us?

SMITH: I've read all that in our worthy paper.

GOULD: And you think the Russians won't go any further?

SMITH: On the contrary, first they'll conquer Europe, then America, then Australia. Then the Antarctic. . . Of all the bunk!

GOULD: Bunk? Did you ever read Marx's *Communist Manifesto*? And Lenin's *Imperialism, the Last Stage of Capitalism*—Note the *last*. Did you read it or not?

SMITH: No, I never read it, and what's it got to do with all this, anyway?

GOULD: And then. . . .

MACPHERSON: Hold your horses, Jack. Get on with your discussion without me, I've got to go. Take my advice, Harry, and listen to Jack. He'll tell you what we both think. And now just a couple of words. . . You'll fly in two weeks. Time—three months. The book—a month after you're back. Part'll go as articles in the paper. Publication guaranteed. Success guaranteed. Thirty thousand dollars guaranteed. Your answer here by midnight tomorrow. Say yes, and you get my first check for seven thousand five hundred. Think it over. Goodbye. (*Exit.*)

SMITH: Seventy-five hundred bucks! Not bad for a first advance. The amount makes me think that I'd have to write something pretty vile for you.

GOULD: No. You'd just have to remember the demands of the times. And our present views on Russia, summarized here (*takes a newspaper from his pocket and gives it to Smith*) in my article. It's not written in such brilliant style—you know I don't go in for that. But some of the ideas and maybe the names, even, might come in handy.

SMITH: "Ten reasons why the Russians want war." That's not true. The Russians don't want war. That's impossible.

GOULD: When did you leave Russia?

SMITH: In December, '42.

GOULD: And now it's February '46.

SMITH: All the same, they just can't want war.

GOULD: Well, maybe not just now. Let's say even that they don't want it now, I'm not afraid of crossing my "t's". I myself stand for an immediate preventive war against world Communism. The Communists are fanatics, and the Russians are double fanatics as Russians and as Communists. Believe me, if they think they can make the world accept their ideas nothing'll stop them.

SMITH (*clutching his head*): Stop. Be quiet.

GOULD: I'm right.

SMITH: Possible. Everything is possible. I don't understand anything any more in this crazy post-war world. Bombs, espionage, Iran, Korea, Trieste, blocs, unions! Was that what I was thinking about when I was in the Sahara, when I was lying in the mud at Okinawa, when they were taking splinters out of me in New Guinea? Was it all just for that? I can't breathe, I can't write, I can't think. I came with ten dollars in my pocket and I drank it all in order to stop thinking. (*Lights a cigarette, and suddenly calms down.*) I don't know if I want to fight the Russians or not, but I don't want to write that book. I froze with them at the front near Gzhatsk. I drank vodka with them in the trenches. I saw Russian children who'd been hanged, and even if all you say is true, I can't write that book. Find someone else.

GOULD: Think it over till tomorrow.

SMITH (*rising*): Think, think. What's there to think about? Of course, the way things are with me, I ought to go. It's crazy not to go. But I can't. (*A pause.*) Listen. Lend me a hundred dollars—I need it today. I'll earn it somehow and pay you back.

GOULD: Maybe you'd like more?

SMITH: No, a hundred.

GOULD: Here. (*Presses a bell.*)

JESSIE (*entering*): Yes?

GOULD: First of all, Jessie, we're going.

(*Nods at the telephone.*)

JESSIE (*sitting down*): All right, I'll be here.

GOULD: Secondly, tell the boss that I'll call him up, and Smith'll give his reply at midnight tomorrow. Well, and thirdly, bye.

JESSIE: So long.

SMITH: So long, Jessie.

JESSIE: So long.

(*Gould goes out first, Smith stops in the doorway.*)

SMITH: Jessie.

JESSIE: Well, dear?

SMITH: Ten-thirty at the Press Bar, O.K.?

JESSIE: All right, dear.

(*Smith exits. Jessie rises, walks about the room.*)
Yes, dear. . . of course, dear . . . very dear . . . For three months. . . Well, what of it, another three months to wait for happiness. That's not so much for a woman who (*looks in the mirror*) between ourselves, strictly between ourselves, is thirty-three.

Curtain

SCENE 2

Evening of the next day. The bar of a small restaurant, a regular newspapermen's haunt. A long, cramped and rather dirty room through which it is necessary to pass in order to reach the restaurant. Left—the street door, right—the door to the restaurant. In the foreground, two or three small low tables and deep armchairs. In the background, an ordinary bar, a few shelves with bottles, and a barman. The clock on the wall shows 10:30.

Smith sits at one of the tables. During the whole scene people cross the stage, entering and leaving the restaurant. Some of them go to the bar and stand there a few minutes, drinking and talking, then leave.

Preston enters from the restaurant.

PRESTON: How do, Harry. Back again and at the same old time.

SMITH: I'm waiting for Jessie, like yesterday.

PRESTON: Queer place to meet your girl. A hundred newshounds an hour passing through.

SMITH: There weren't so many before the war. To hell with it, anyway. I'm getting married.

PRESTON: Jessie?

SMITH: Yes. Sit down.

PRESTON: Can't. Got to go and read the night telegrams. (*Sitting down on the arm of the other chair.*) This morning I was at the last press conference with the Russians.

SMITH: Well, how was it?

PRESTON: All right. One of our boys tried to get a parting dig at them, but they gave us as good as they got—said that they don't look on the greater part of our press as the voice of the American people, that on the contrary, they think it would be an insult to our people to consider such a press as their voice.

SMITH: Not bad.

PRESTON: I rather liked it too. I'll tear 'em to pieces for it today, though. It's hell working these days, Harry, especially in my foreign department.

SMITH: Why?

PRESTON: We're in too much of a hurry, writing a lot of stupid stuff. Crap. And the chief's crazy, especially when Gould's around.

SMITH: Yes, I noticed that.

PRESTON: Can't be helped. During the war the boss got greedy, played up to the public, started going left. Didn't listen to Gould. And now he's trying to go into reverse, but he doesn't want to see that a car's got to stop first—even if only for a second. No, he wants to go from full speed ahead to full speed back.

SMITH: Haven't you tried to make the boss see it?

PRESTON: Make him see it? What's the good? After all, I'm just a conveyor hand, so far as he's concerned. Yesterday I worked the left wheel, today he tells me to work the right. He'd be really surprised if I started to argue with him, and he'd find someone else. And that someone else would do what he wants, anyway. But what he wants is extremes, because that's what his big bosses in Wall Street want. And if he starts arguing with them, they'll find someone else instead of him, just as he would in my case. Isn't that right?

SMITH: It's true, but it's nauseating.

PRESTON: Nauseating, but commonplace, and then, after all, I'm only the editor of my department, and there's others to write and sign all that crap, whether it's me sitting there or someone else. By the way, look at this—twenty lines of Hardy's. Just the same, he's an awful louse. (*A pause.*) So—you're off to Russia?

SMITH: I don't know yet. I've got to give the chief my answer today.

PRESTON: What? But I sent off an application for your visa today.

SMITH: Is that so? So he's already decided that I've decided?

PRESTON: Oh, no, much simpler than that. He's just decided that he's decided, and that means it's all settled. Good night, Harry. (*Exit.*)

SMITH (*alone, takes a paper from the rack, turns over the pages, finds the place he wants*): Another whiskey. (*Walks to the bar, reading. The barman hands him the whiskey. Still reading, he returns to his place.*) There's a son-of-a-bitch. (*Throws down the paper.*)

(*Hardy walks across the stage from the street door on his way to the restaurant.*)

SMITH: Hardy. Just a minute.

HARDY (*approaching*): Good evening. It's nearly five years since I saw you. You've changed plenty.

SMITH: Unfortunately you haven't. Sit down and have a drink.

HARDY: Haven't got time. Gotta get supper and get a story off.

SMITH: You've written quite enough for today. Have a drink. My treat. (*To the barman.*) Two whiskeys. (*To Hardy*) Why did you write that crap about the Russian newspapermen? It's a lie.

HARDY: There're people that saw it.

SMITH: That's a lie.

HARDY: They say they saw it.

SMITH: And that's another lie. They saw the Russian newspapermen give money to our trade union men? Say, nobody can hear us. Be a man, admit that it's all lies. Just to me, between ourselves.

HARDY: Just to you, between ourselves?

SMITH: Yes.

HARDY: Lies.

SMITH (*rises, takes two glasses of whiskey the barman has poured out, and returns*): Drink your whiskey. (*Hardy drinks.*) Well, and why are you such a swine?

HARDY: Oh, go to hell. I'm sick of hearing that all the time. (*A pause.*) Buy me another drink and for once in my life I'll tell you frankly what I think of myself and you.

SMITH (*to the barman*): Another whiskey.

HARDY: In your good days you earned six times as much as I did?

SMITH: Why six times?

HARDY: Don't argue. I always knew to the last cent how much everybody earned if they got more than I did. I'm poor and so I'm envious. (*Rises, gets a whiskey from the bar, returns, and drinks it.*) To your future wife.

SMITH: What?

HARDY: I know everything a bit earlier than other people. That's my job. I'm a scandalmonger. I'm a swine—because I always earned a sixth of what you or Preston did.

SMITH: Take some other job.

HARDY: Don't know any. Got no talent. Twelve lines of crap badly written. But people don't mind what style crap's written in, if it only appears in every issue. Another whiskey and I'll get up courage to tell you something else.

SMITH (*to the barman*): Another whiskey.

HARDY: When you went to the front I had a wife and three children. Now I've a wife and five. And a house in Jamaica with payments that never end, and furniture on the installment plan, and life on the installment plan. Ten dollars for crap, and six of it goes for diapers and medicine. Incidentally, I'm very fond of children. (*Goes to the bar and returns with another whiskey.*) Let's drink to my children. I know all the fellows laugh at me because I drink only when I'm treated. (*Drinks.*) Some day they'll understand me. Or maybe they won't. Noble actions begin with a hundred a week. But for fifty you can only do dirty ones. Anyway... Another whiskey and I'll finish.

SMITH (*to the barman*): Another whiskey.

HARDY: Gave money to one of the trade union officials. Lies? Of course it's a lie. A lie for ten dollars. And you? A trip to Russia. And a plan for a book that Gould gave you. Yes, I know all about it, that's my job. That's lies too, only it's for thirty thousand. How many children have you got?

SMITH: I have no children. (*Hardy goes to the bar and returns with another whiskey.*)

HARDY: Let's drink to your children, that is no, I'm drunk, I guess. I wanted to say—let's drink to your never having any. No, that's not right either. No, no. That's just what I wanted to say. Then it's easier to be noble. And to your book on Russia. (*Drinks.*) Of course you must write it. Thirty thousand! I advise you to write it. Better crap for thirty thousand than for ten dollars. And you can't keep clean, anyway. Can't get away from it. Thirty thousand! I'll tell you the truth. I've always liked you. You're a good guy. Another whiskey and I... No, I can't. I'm drunk already. The fellows don't like me and they don't often treat me to drinks. The last time was in February. I'm drunk as hell. Goodnight. I guess I won't have any dinner. (*Rises with difficulty.*)

(*Murphy enters from the street door.*)

MURPHY: Harry!

SMITH: Bob!

MURPHY: Ah, Hardy. Come outside, Hardy. Just a couple of words. (*To Smith*) Excuse me, Harry, it'll take exactly three minutes.

HARDY (*thickly, unable to speak distinctly*): Lishen, Murphy, I'm not going anywhere with you.

MURPHY: Oh, he's drunk all right.

HARDY: Yes, I'm drunk and lemme alone!

SMITH: Leave him alone.

MURPHY: O. K. His good luck that he's drunk.

HARDY: Bo' voyage, Shmith. (*Goes to the door, stops. To Murphy.*) And, Murphy, drop your tricks. Or I'll wri' your boss, Mr. Hearsht. It's mishter Hearsht you work for... I'll write him of your tricksh, and then it'll be just too bad....

MURPHY (*sitting down and turning away*): Oh, to hell with him. How's things, Harry?

HARDY (*holding the door jamb with drunken obstinacy*): You do work for Mishter Hearsht? Eh?

MURPHY: Get out before I sock you!

HARDY (*as before*): O. K. But you do work for Mishter Hearsht? Eh?

MURPHY: Yes, I work for Mr. Hearst. What about it?

HARDY: Nothing. I jusht like to hear you shay it. Goo' ni'. (*Disappears through the door.*)

SMITH: I've been here two days, playing dumb. Keeping quiet and listening, just keeping quiet and listening. Something's happened, either to me or to America.

MURPHY: Both you and America. You've seen what war is, and America hasn't. And so you've both got different ideas about the future. That's all.

SMITH: That's true, but it's not all of it.

MURPHY: Oh, of course, there's only one place where there's all the truth.

SMITH: Where's that?

MURPHY: In heaven.

SMITH: Well, but look here, Gould was in the war three years too, and it's all gone off him like water off a duck's back.

MURPHY: Three years at Air Force Intelligence Headquarters! Went up twice. Decorated six times. Is he still strutting about in his colonel's uniform, by the way?

SMITH: No.

MURPHY: Took it off. He was still wearing it a month ago. Colonel Gould! With all his brains, he was just tickled pink at being called "colonel". Well, so he and Macpherson are sending you to Russia?

SMITH: Wait a bit. Later on. Everybody talks to me about that. It's ages since I've seen you, not since New Guinea. You've got fat. Drinking a lot, I guess?

MURPHY: A bit more than usual.

SMITH: Why?

MURPHY: The woes of the world.

SMITH: And write articles for Hearst to prove that it's all the fault of the Bolsheviks?

MURPHY: Yes. Got to blame someone. There's nothing I'd like better than to say it's all the fault of Mr. Hearst, but I'm afraid he wouldn't print it. Aw, to hell with it all, whatever I write the world won't be a bit better or worse for it.

SMITH: Then why did you want to knock Hardy down?

MURPHY: That's another matter. I met two of those Russian guys he wrote about when I was at the front, on the Elbe. I had drinks with them. Goddam it, they're newspapermen just like me. They say dog eat dog, but it's no good. I may be loony, but I'm against it. What does he want to touch them for? Aren't there enough people in the world, can't he find enough dirt without going after old friends, war correspondents? The bastard. When he writes God knows what about those Russian newspapermen, I can't call him a liar in my paper. With my boss all I could write about the Russians would have to be even worse slander. But just to knock Hardy down a couple of times, without giving any reason, quietly . . . that's a little comfort. You know my philosophy, the world has no morals and to hell with it. But don't foul your own nest.

SMITH: When the war was on I kept thinking that everything ought to be different afterwards.

MURPHY: Ought to be? When the war was on it was our spirit that they borrowed, and now they don't want to pay the debt. The bank of good hopes has failed, my dear man. If I were twenty, I wouldn't care. I'd send them all to hell and go join the Communists. I like them better than any of the others, when all's said and done. But I'm forty-six, and I've got a bad habit of swilling whiskey to the tune of seventy-five dollars a week and not a dollar less.

SMITH: Before the war you used to drink fifty.

MURPHY: That was before the war. . . And fifteen years ago, when I wasn't going downhill, I hardly drank at all, but I allowed myself more liberty in my articles, and it was all right, Hearst stood for it. But now I'm played out, just manage to scrape together two hundred dollars a week, and except for crap about newspapermen, I write everything my dear boss wants, may he fry in hell together with yours.

SMITH: But after all, they're not quite the same thing.

MURPHY: Not quite? That's right. Mine's right wing, yours is half right; but they're both in the same team. Although, you know, I'm sometimes not even angry with mine. If things were the other way round and it wasn't Bob Murphy that worked for William Randolph Hearst, but William Randolph Hearst that worked for Bob Murphy—I wouldn't let him write what he wanted, either, but would make him write what I wanted.

SMITH: And what do you want?

MURPHY: At present—nothing at all. I'd like to write nothing and get my two hundred dollars just the same. But unfortunately that's impossible.

SMITH: And now—what you wanted to talk about first. Shall I go to Russia? You're my only friend. Your "yes" is almost the same as mine.

MURPHY: Thirty thousand?

SMITH: Yes.

MURPHY: Yes. A cottage fifty miles from New York—fifteen; furniture—five. And ten thousand for a rainy day, so that you can sit and write whatever you like. Whatever you like! Yes. Of course, on the other hand. . . But I'm not the guy to be talking about the other hand. Yes. Agree. Just now everything's fallen into line for it. With all their success our bosses are getting nervous. They know just as well as we do that more than half of America is thinking something very different from what we're writing in its name. We're like a false beard. Pull it off, and who can tell what sort of face is underneath? Macpherson needs you because of your first war book about Russia which even the Russians praised . . . that means that the reader looks on you as being objective. Just you and just now. Yes. Of course—Yes. Let's have a drink to your book. Though, why the book? What dope'll drink to an illness? You want to drink to the recovery. To your recovery. Your thirty thousand. (*They drink.*)

SMITH: By the way, Bob, you can't let me have fifty till the day after tomorrow?

MURPHY: Whoever asks me for money in the evening? In the evening my pockets are always empty. (*Turns them inside out.*) Here's all there is—eighteen dollars.

SMITH (*taking them*): All right. I took Jessie to a night club yesterday and quite forgot that in the morning I'd have to buy one of those trifles. (*Pulls an engagement ring out of his waistcoat pocket.*)

MURPHY: You're going to marry Jessie?

SMITH: Yes.

MURPHY: A pity. She won't like me.

SMITH: Why not?

MURPHY: None of my friends' wives like me. I'm like a reminder of a better bachelor world, and wives don't like that. You're expecting Jessie?

SMITH: Yes.

MURPHY: I'm going.

(*Enter Jessie.*)

JESSIE: Oh, here you are, you two!

MURPHY: You never seem to change, Jessie. And I've known you for. . . (*a pause*) five years.

JESSIE: That's fine.

MURPHY: Well, I'm off. Harry, I forgot. Give me some change for a taxi.

SMITH: Here you are. (*Puts money in his hand.*)

MURPHY: Good night. (*Exit.*)

JESSIE: Same as usual—always without money. A terrible life. Well, shall we sit here?

SMITH: No, let's go straight to the club.

JESSIE (*looks at the clock. It shows a quarter to twelve*): But you've got to see Macpherson at twelve. You won't have time.

SMITH: Yes, that's right. We'll sit here a few minutes. Here . . . (*takes out the ring*) look. . . .

JESSIE: I see. And I'm very happy.

SMITH: If you only knew how I felt, couldn't get any rest all night after I left you at your door. Why wouldn't you let me stay?

JESSIE: Harry dear, you proposed to me last night.

SMITH: Yes, and you accepted.

JESSIE: Yes, I accepted. I'm not your mistress any more, I'm your fiancée. I know what you want to say—we're not boy and girl any more. That's true. But let's make it the way we used to dream when we were young. That ring, and all the fuss, and going shopping, and the new house that nobody's lived in before us and the doorstep that I cross the first time when I come there with you from church—can you understand me?

SMITH (*taking her hand*): I understand.

JESSIE: No, you don't understand it all. It's only an old sinner like me that can want so badly to have quite a different life. Our home. Ours. . . When you're in Russia I'll do everything myself, with my own hands. And when you come back, our home will be the best place in all the world for you, my handsome boy. (*Ruffles his hair with her hands and kisses his head. Looks at the clock.*) Time for you to call up Macpherson.

SMITH: No, go on talking. I've got time.

JESSIE: To be together. . . If only God hasn't punished me and I can still have children. Just to live a few years without wandering about the world and without thinking of money.

GOULD (*entering*): Good evening, Jessie. Harry, why are you here? Macpherson expects you in a minute.

SMITH: Yes. I'll go and call him up now. (*Rises.*)

GOULD: What are you going to tell him?

SMITH (*meets Jessie's eyes. A long silence*): I'll call him up now. (*Goes out into the vestibule.*)

GOULD: Will he agree?

JESSIE: I think he will.

GOULD: In that case he'll be in Russia three months. And two more weeks flying there and back.

JESSIE: Well, and so what?

GOULD: I've bought a cottage in Stamford. Forty minutes from here by car. Very quiet. Nobody anywhere around.

JESSIE: Glad for you. But what's that got to do with me?

GOULD: After all, it's me that's got you your happy family life, and before you plunge right into it, while you're waiting for your husband, you could say goodbye to old times with me. It would be only natural.

JESSIE: Since yesterday—no.

GOULD: Jessie. . . .

JESSIE: Not with you and not with anybody. We've made an alliance. I know that he doesn't want to go. But he's sacrificing himself for me. And I'll do the same for him. Though for that matter, to be quite honest, to refuse you isn't such a sacrifice.

GOULD: Yes, of course. (*Takes a few steps, limping more than usual.*)

JESSIE: Don't, Jack. I know the story about the Japanese sniper. But it was I who was with you in the car when it crashed into that telegraph pole in Manila. Had you forgotten?

GOULD: That's the way I like you best—with a bit of the devil.

JESSIE: Stop it. There'll never be anything more, anyhow. (*A pause.*) What do you think, Jack? Why's he talking to Macpherson such a long time? Suppose he. . . No, that's impossible.

GOULD: Why is it impossible? Anything's possible with that crazy guy.

SMITH (*entering*): Have I kept you waiting long? Barman, three whiskeys.

GOULD: What did you tell the chief?

SMITH (*meets Jessie's eyes, looks into them for a long time*): What did I tell the chief? I told him: Yes.

Curtain

ACT II

SCENE I

Four months later. The Smiths' new suburban home. A large study. A desk, some glassed-in bookcases still nearly empty. Several armchairs, two low tables, a divan with cushions and a Russian teacosy doll. Part of the wall is of glass, with a veranda visible beyond.

Meg Stanley sitting at the table. Smith is walking up and down the study, dictating to her.

SMITH: I would not say that the Russians in general are unable to smile, but on hearing the word "fascism" they lose all sense of humour. They remember too well just what it is, far better than we do. A hundred times they asked me—with an amazement that made me very uncomfortable—why it is already forgotten in America.

Only a fool could think that the only reason why the Russians do not want war just now is because of their losses and the destruction that has been wrought in their land. I travelled in Central Asia, in flowering little towns not far from Tashkent. The war never came anywhere near them. When I was talking to people, I deliberately selected some who had lost nobody in the war. And it was just by talking to them that I finally and definitely understood that it is not a case of war-weariness or weakness—it is a

case of the psychology of people who, like the whole of present-day Russia, have never wanted war with us and do not want it now, quite apart from any question of strength or weakness.

"What do you think about the possibility of war with us?" I asked one of them. "I don't think about it, except when I read what's in your papers," he replied. And there was nothing I could say to contradict him. (*Breaking off dictation.*) Well, Meg, got it down?

MEG: Of course.

SMITH: That's the end of Chapter VI. (*Looks at his watch.*) For the first time in my life, I'm keeping on time, worse luck. On the thirtieth everything'll be finished. (*Thoughtfully.*) On the thirtieth everything will be finished.

MEG: What's the matter, Harry?

SMITH: Nothing. I was only saying that on the thirtieth of June everything will be finished. Everything. (*His eyes take in the room.*) And this, too. And all my life, as it is now. Though that's not right, it's not the thirtieth, but the first. It'll take Macpherson a day to read it. But on the morning of the first. . . (*Laughs suddenly.*) Meg, can you imagine his face on the morning of the first?

MEG (*laughing*): He'll have a stroke.

SMITH: A stroke? No, he's not that kind. When he's in a rage it just makes him stronger. They say that when he went bankrupt in 1930, he was in such a rage that his gout left him, and it never came back, he went fishing in Florida. In two months he came back and started again from the beginning. Get that? And here it's nothing but a paltry unpleasantness with a paltry hireling.

MEG: I rather think the unpleasantness will be a big one.

SMITH: But the hireling's a little one. All the worse for him. That is, for me. (*A pause.*) Do you remember fifteen years ago, Meg, when I first came into your little newspaper office in Astor Place? Just out of college, young, happy and honest.

MEG: And you're honest now.

SMITH: Now? Yes. Nearly. But then I was young, and I thought I could be both honest and happy.

MEG: And now you're unhappy?

SMITH: Very. I'm no longer of an age to laugh at the ordinary, commonplace happiness of having a wife, a home, a checkbook. It's hard to think that in ten days I shall pull it all down with my own hands, like a house of cards.

MEG: But maybe there's some way out?

SMITH: Maybe. . . By the way, the Packard that brings you here, that's on the installment plan too, just like everything else.

MEG: But your wife's not on the installment plan.

SMITH: No, she isn't. Though I don't know. I don't know anything.

MEG: Harry, you're a beast. You've got a good wife and she loves you.

SMITH: Yes, she loves me, but I don't know yet what she'll think of the writer of this book. (*Slaps the sheets.*) It's I who's depriving her of the possibility of this happiness (*gestures round the room*) that she'd waited for so long, that possibility which may have done more to make her fall in love with me than anything else. And I can't even blame her if she does leave me. I deceived her.

MEG: She won't leave you, Harry. Nobody could ever leave you.

SMITH: I don't know. If only I did know.

MEG: Tell her the truth about the book. Tell her today.

SMITH: Not for anything on earth! This way I've still got ten days of quiet happiness. No, nobody must know for the present, except you, my old friend, my little funny tousle-head friend. (*A pause.*)

MEG: I'm going.

SMITH: No. Stay another hour. Have dinner with us. There's no need of it for the present, but all the same Jessie does her own cooking and she does it wonderfully. Stay awhile. I woke up last night for some reason and suddenly thought of Fred Williams, as he used to be in the old days, and our paper which our enemies called red, although it was only honest. By the way, Meg, have you noticed that more and more often the word "red" is becoming a synonym for honest?

MEG: Well, finish your book and you'll be called red again. That's not such a bad thing, Harry. There are many millions in America who will support you. There is no free speech in our papers, but people will support you. Yes.

SMITH: Yes. Only I'm afraid that that adjective "red" is going to have a bad effect on my income. What fiend possessed me to listen to Jessie and buy this time-payment house instead of a small one I could have paid for at once, as I wanted to do? At least there'd be a roof over our heads.

JESSIE (*entering wearing an apron*): Well, finished? (*Goes up to Smith and kisses him.*) Tired?

SMITH: And you?

JESSIE: Very tired. That apple pie means loads of trouble, as Murphy would say.

SMITH: And how's Bob? Is he up?

JESSIE: I think so. Half an hour ago somebody was spluttering and swearing in the bathroom.

SMITH: I've asked Meg to stay for dinner.

JESSIE: I'm very glad. I asked her yesterday but she wouldn't stay.

MEG: Yesterday I had to get twenty pages transcribed during the evening.

JESSIE: I wish you'd persuade him to read it to me.

SMITH: I especially told Meg to keep everything transcribed in New York. For the present, nothing but forging ahead. When it's finished, I'll read it to you all at once.

JESSIE: But tell me, Meg, is it interesting? You don't know how I envy you.

MEG: It is—very interesting. (*A pause.*) Jessie, when do you have dinner?

JESSIE: In half an hour.

MEG: I'll have a bath first, then. May I?

JESSIE: Of course.

MEG: Thanks. (*Exit.*)

JESSIE (*looking at the stenogram lying on the table*): Is it going well?

SMITH: Not so bad.

JESSIE: Well, why don't you want to dictate to me? I swear I'm no worse stenographer than Meg. And I'd just love it.

SMITH: And I just love that at last you don't need to take down shorthand, or type. I love to see you being just the mistress of this house. A housewife—and that's all. And even these pies—it's only because you want to.

JESSIE: You don't understand a thing. (*Pointing to the stenogram.*) That also would be only because I wanted to, if you were dictating. You. (*Kisses him.*) No, you're right, I'd only disturb you. (*Looks at the stenogram.*) But I'm so interested. Once or twice I tried to take a peep, but Meg uses a different system from mine, and I've a job to make out one word in ten. In the mornings when you're asleep, I come here to tidy up your study. I dust every sheet of paper on your table.

SMITH (*kissing her hand*): But why do you do that?

JESSIE: What do you mean, why? I like it. And then I open the window and sit down here in your arm chair and sing something, talk to myself and think of you and of what else we can hang here, over the sofa, when you finish the book and we get some more money. I think we should have a small, good water color. And then I hum and talk again, and then I go to wake you. . . .

SMITH: You look tired.

JESSIE: It's happiness that makes me tired. Ten times a day I come to the door and listen, listen to you walking up and down, and every time your steps come near the door I want to open it and kiss you. But I don't do it, I just stand there quietly. And then I go away and think about you again, and so on till evening. (*A pause.*) But isn't it a good thing I was stubborn and made you buy this big house? Where would you have been able to walk up and down and stamp your big feet? (*A pause. She takes a letter from her apron pocket.*) I quite forgot. A letter from your mother.

SMITH (*tearing open the envelope and taking a small sheet from it*): Well, my old lady's as brief as usual. (*Reads.*)

JESSIE (*sitting down beside him*): May I?

SMITH: Of course. (*Both read in silence.*)

JESSIE: How awful. Why does she write like that?

SMITH (*folding up the letter*): Can't be helped. She has her own way of looking at things.

JESSIE: Are you upset?

SMITH: Well, after all it's not so pleasant when your own mother calls you a scoundrel. She must have heard some rumour that I'm writing a book on Russia that's very different from the other. That's all.

JESSIE: I don't understand. What's she got to do with the Russians and your book? After all, it's your own business.

SMITH (*ironically*): She's a woman of old-fashioned liberal views. She believes in ideals. And when she considers that her son is beginning to earn money dishonourably, she doesn't want to take an allowance from him any more. It may be old-fashioned of her, but it's logical.

JESSIE: Do you really think that you're doing wrong by writing this book?

SMITH: No. On the contrary. Her letter tells me once more that I'm doing the right thing. (*A pause.*) What have you got today, besides the pie?

JESSIE: Leg of lamb (*jumping up and hastily kissing Smith*), but I'm afraid there won't be any. (*Runs out.*)

SMITH (*alone, takes out the letter again, laughs*): She thinks that I shall have money but she can't take it, and I think that she could take it all right, but there won't be any to take. . . .

(*Gould enters from the veranda, followed by Macpherson.*)

GOULD: How do, Harry. (*Throws his hat down on a chair.*) I've brought the chief along to see your den.

SMITH: How are you, Chief.

MACPHERSON: You'll excuse us, I hope Harry.

SMITH: I'm glad you've come. Sit down. Whiskey?

MACPHERSON: No, thanks. I'll have to do a lot of drinking later on today.

SMITH: I thought that was against your rules.

MACPHERSON: Yes. But it's not every day a man turns sixty.

SMITH: You're sixty?

MACPHERSON: Yes. And I only remembered it this morning.

GOULD: This morning the chief got out of bed groaning, felt that he couldn't straighten his back and realized that he was sixty.

MACPHERSON (*unexpectedly gives Gould a jesting but pretty hard thump in the chest; he laughs and crumples up on the sofa*): Gould's a liar. This morning I woke . . . well, not at home, and my back bent and straightened as well as it ever did. But when I got to the office I found a cheque for 14,232 dollars on my desk. When I was thirty and for the first time thought I was going to go bankrupt the next day, I had enough will power to keep my sense of humour and put five thousand out of the seven I had, in the bank, to get it back when I'm sixty. Just to be safe. And when I saw the cheque, then it reminded me that I'm sixty today. I've put back the capital, the five thousand, till I'm ninety, and the interest'll go to treat my friends, including you and Jessie. O. K.?

SMITH: I appreciate it. Many happy returns of the day. But. . . .

MACPHERSON: I didn't invite you beforehand. That's a dirty trick. But I really only remembered it today. But you console yourselves that it's the same with all the others; even Winston Churchill, who being in New York, may come along for old times' sake, only knew an hour before you did. Well, I've got to go. Dinner in an hour. And I went eight miles out of my way for you, anyway. Four here, four back. Have you got a car now?

SMITH: Yes. Just a few minutes, Chief. I'll go and ask Jessie.

MACPHERSON: We'll wait. (*Exit Smith.*)

GOULD: You're not without your little bit of vanity, all the same, Charlie. Why all that about Churchill?

MACPHERSON: First, for me Churchill's not a little bit of vanity, but a big one, especially now when his politics are mine; and secondly, I knew him when he was First Lord of the Admiralty, and thirdly, yes, I am vain. Well, and so what?

GOULD: Nothing. I was only thinking that he'll hardly come to your dinner.

MACPHERSON: Who can tell? Now I've an idea that just at this moment he may be particularly interested in the American press. (*A pause.*)

GOULD (*going up to the table and looking at the stenogram*): Looks like he's writing like mad.

MACPHERSON: And he's doing right. On September thirtieth the book's got to be on sale everywhere.

GOULD: Three months—from getting the M.S. to the book coming out. Will Kessler manage to get it published on time?

MACPHERSON: He'll have to. Unfortunately I'm not yet in a position to postpone congressional elections. I've got to have that book before them, and not after, and you know it as well as I do.

GOULD: Listen, Charlie, what if we start advertising it now?

MACPHERSON: That crazy hurry of yours again! It'll be finished in ten days.

GOULD: But if we start tomorrow? An extra ten days is something! I've never given you bad advice yet.

MACPHERSON: You're giving me crazy advice now. To advertise a book sight unseen. That would be a new thing for me.

GOULD: You've seen more than once that I bring luck?

MACPHERSON: Yes.

GOULD: Starting tomorrow. Advertisements everywhere. At my own risk. O.K.?

MACPHERSON: At your own risk?

GOULD: Yes! Though to be frank, there's none. I can see that book already better than if I'd read it. Well, O.K.?

MACPHERSON: You're very sure of yourself.

GOULD: Yes. O.K.?

MACPHERSON: O.K. Only don't forget this is the thirteenth time I've taken your advice.

GOULD: That's all right. I'm not superstitious. Second book by the same author. A few quotations from Russian papers of '42—where they speak of the first book, say that Smith had the right approach, understood things correctly and so on. The writer whom the Russians themselves called fair. A few words about Smith—was in the trenches at Gzhatsk, was near Stalingrad. A man who finds it difficult to say a bad word about Russia, but who nevertheless can no longer keep silent, and so on and so forth. . . .

MACPHERSON: And so on and so forth. Clear. What are we going to call the book?

GOULD: The same thing—"Why do the Russians Want War?

MACPHERSON: No, that's too direct. We must think it over some more. And what do you think, Jack, do the Russians really want war?

GOULD: Now? Of course not.

MACPHERSON: But later on?

GOULD: I don't know. The only thing I know is this: they're destroying capitalism, and I'm out to destroy Communism. By any means. That's all. We're quits.

MACPHERSON: With just the difference that they're doing it at home, in their own country, and you're pushing your nose into another country, theirs.

GOULD: You're not thinking of joining the Communist Party, are you?

MACPHERSON: No. I was just thinking that you're remarkably ruthless—like all renegades, for that matter.

GOULD: What's that?

MACPHERSON: I said that you're remarkably ruthless, like all renegades, for that matter. Your trade union past gets under your skin.

GOULD: Charlie, I wouldn't advise you to go on. I can bite.

MACPHERSON: I know. But you're wrong. You should never be ashamed of your past, and especially of an effective beginning like yours. When a young strike leader suddenly comes round and gives me six stories exposing the Reds—God, that's effective. Right then, fifteen years ago, I knew at once that you'd go far anyway, and if you came onto the paper, very far indeed.

GOULD: Note—on your paper.

MACPHERSON: Of course, not on the *Daily Worker*. When you think of Communism you always get the feeling that if it came in America, you'd most certainly be hanged.

GOULD: Side by side with you.

MACPHERSON: I'm not so sure of that. But do you know what you'd do if such an impossible thing as a Communist dictatorship happened tomorrow?

GOULD: I am curious to know.

MACPHERSON: You'd change colour like lightning and hurry to hand over all your present friends, just as you did fifteen years ago with the ones you had then.

GOULD: You've evidently made up your mind to quarrel with me today.

MACPHERSON: Not a bit of it. That's just one back for yours about Churchill and my vanity. I'm vain all right, but I don't like other people reminding me of it. And this morning again I saw you looking a bit too affectionately at my editorial chair; I don't like too much haste, especially in young men.

GOULD: You're getting old, Charlie, you're just grouchy.

MACPHERSON: Maybe.

GOULD: Anyone would think that you want to destroy the Communists less than I do.

MACPHERSON: No. But I've got a minimum program for the Russians.

GOULD: For publication?

MACPHERSON: Yes. Keep them five or six years under the threat of war, without giving them a chance to get on their feet, and then demand just three things of them.

GOULD: What things?

MACPHERSON: Freedom of their markets exclusively for us—that's one; removal of their government foreign trade monopoly

that is two, and big concessions for us—three. And for the rest, let them keep on being Communists if they want—that's their own affair. (*A pause.*)

GOULD: Smith's keeping us waiting a pretty long time.

SMITH (*entering*): Excuse me, but I just haven't had much experience yet talking to women. Jessie thanks you. She's dressing now. We'll follow you in half an hour.

MACPHERSON: Good. (*To Gould.*) Jack, this is the third time today you're forgetting your hat. Only famous men have the right to be absent-minded. Oh, by the way, Harry. Gould suggests calling your book: "Why Do the Russians Want War?" What do you think of that title?

SMITH: Not very much.

MACPHERSON: The same here.

SMITH: What about cutting out the first word. Just—"The Russians Want War". And then a big question mark.

MACPHERSON: "The Russians Want War" and a small question mark, a third the size of the letters, hardly visible. Hardly visible, but objective, so that if anybody looks, they can still see it. What about that? Not a bad idea. It'll do. I'll be expecting you. (*Exit with Gould. Smith alone on the stage for some seconds. Then Murphy comes from the inner door, more puffy than usual, with crossed plaster under his eye, in a thick old sweater.*)

SMITH: Well, had enough sleep?

MURPHY: Fourteen hours—after three nights. I must have been drunk as a lord when I tumbled in on you last night?

SMITH: No, not so bad. Only for some reason you were clutching a woman's hat under your arm and kept repeating tearfully what a fine chap your boss William Randolph Hearst really is at bottom.

MURPHY: Well, then I must have been crazy. I'll have to stop drinking. Why did Gould come here?

SMITH: How do you know he was here?

MURPHY: He's got a voice like a dentist's drill, can't mistake it.

SMITH: He came with Macpherson. The chief's sixty today, and he came to invite Jessie and me to dinner.

MURPHY: I see. . . He must need your book pretty badly. And what about the apple pie? Jessie promised it to me.

SMITH: She didn't know. But the pie'll be there. You'll have dinner with Meg, and we'll be back in the evening.

MURPHY: Me, with Meg? That radical girl of yours shies away from me as though I were a snake even when your're here: if she's left alone with me she'll simply pour hot soup over my head and then tell me all she thinks of Hearst and of me while I'm busy nursing the burns. She really thinks that he and I are practically the same thing.

SMITH: Meg? You're crazy.

MURPHY: I know what I'm talking about. She'll certainly dump the soup over me. I'm just surprised she's taking down your book. Her mother is probably sick and she needs the money very badly.

SMITH: No.

MURPHY: Then why's she doing it?

SMITH: Why? (*A pause.*) The cigars are in that box.

MURPHY: This is my third time here and the third time I'm envying you like a swine.

SMITH: And you were afraid of Jessie. Can you complain about her?

MURPHY: No. She loves you so much that she's even ready to stand me. (*A pause.*) Yes. It's good. (*Goes to the table and weighs the stenogram in his hand.*) And if only there could be all this life (*gestures with his hand round the room*) without the need of this filth. Thirty thousand. But they've started paying me lousily. By the way. . . The reason I got drunk yesterday was because I'd got a big advance on a job. I've even got some of it left. (*Pulls a crumpled bundle of bills out of his pocket.*) See how much there is?

SMITH: What's the job?

MURPHY: A punk one. An attempt to beat the altitude record with a passenger on board. I'm the passenger.

SMITH: A decent plane?

MURPHY: No, a bitch, it's just a risk for the noise it'll make. An ordinary sports plane without any special gadgets. That's just it. They want to beat the record with that type. Advertisement for durability. A new firm, not very well thought of. But they need the noise and they're paying me well to broadcast from the plane.

SMITH: How much?

MURPHY: A thousand and a half.

SMITH: Don't go up. To hell with them. If it was Lockheed or Consolidated, it would be another matter.

MURPHY: Lockheed and Consolidated have a name, they don't need the advertisement. These do. Can't refuse. It's the same with me as it probably is with your stenographer, my mother's seriously ill, and I've got to get six hundred dollars together and send her quick to Rochester for treatment. And to scrape it together by stopping drinking—that's more than I can manage. (*A pause.*) Listen, tell me frankly, you weren't disappointed with the Russians this trip?

SMITH: No.

MURPHY: They're just as fine guys as they were during the war?

SMITH: Just the same.

MURPHY: That's lousy of them.

SMITH: Why?

MURPHY: Because if they'd got worse, we wouldn't feel so bad writing all the dirt we do about them.

JESSIE (*entering*): I'm ready. Let's go.

SMITH: See you this evening, Bob. (*Takes Jessie's arm.*) The cigars are on the table.

MURPHY: I know that already. And where's the whiskey? In that cupboard, am I right?

SMITH: You're right.

(*Enter Meg.*)

SMITH: Meg, I've got to apologize.

MEG: It doesn't matter. Jessie's told me.

SMITH: The car'll be back in an hour to take you to town. O.K.?

MEG: Fine.

SMITH: And meanwhile, you'll be the hostess and look after old Bob.

MEG: Very well, I'll look after your old Bob.

JESSIE: Goodbye, Meg. And you, Bob, try to keep on your feet till we come back.

MURPHY: I'll try.

SMITH: Goodbye. (*Exit arm in arm with Jessie. Meg sits down in the armchair opposite Murphy. Silence. The sound of a car driving away. Silence again.*)

MURPHY (*goes to the cupboard, takes out a bottle and two glasses*): Whiskey or brandy?

MEG: I don't care.

MURPHY (*puts everything on the table and sits down*): I take it without soda. And you?

MEG: Any old way.

MURPHY (*pouring out*): To a long journey. (*Both drink.*) You must find it pretty revolting taking down that book?

MEG: Why?

MURPHY: You're radical. But of course, money talks. But you find it revolting sitting here with me? Don't you? After all, you don't get paid for that.

MEG: No, strange as it may seem, I don't find it revolting sitting here with you. Only. . . .

MURPHY: Only what?

MEG: Don't start philosophizing. Right?

MURPHY: Right. (*Pours out.*) And you know why I drink so much?

MEG: Why?

MURPHY: Every day I dictate and broadcast so much filth that I have to keep disinfecting my throat. And I do it with alcohol.

MEG: But sometimes you type. You need whiskey for your hands, too.

MURPHY: You're right. But I can't afford that. Come and have dinner.

MEG: Let's go. Listen—how quiet it is. We're like two sailors alone on a deserted ship.

MURPHY: After a shipwreck.

MEG: Or before it. . . (*A long pause. Both silently leave the room.*)

Curtain

SCENE 2

The same as Scene 1. Evening. Ten days have passed. Smith is alone, sitting motionless in a deep armchair in the corner. A long silence. Enter Jessie, in housefrock and apron as in the previous scene.

JESSIE: What's the matter, Harry?

SMITH (*rousing himself*): Yes. What?

JESSIE: What's the matter with you, dear? It's half past nine. You've been sitting like this for half an hour.

SMITH: It can't be half past nine?

JESSIE: I've been in twice, I thought you were dozing.

SMITH: No, I wasn't.

JESSIE: Aren't you glad you've finished the book?

SMITH: Yes.

JESSIE: You're tired? Isn't that it? And all those people I've got coming—I shouldn't have invited them.

SMITH: No, no, why not? I'm glad you did. Only where did you get the money? I didn't think there was any left on my account.

JESSIE: On your account? Of course not. There hasn't been any for a week. But I. . . .

SMITH: You borrowed it?

JESSIE: No, it was just my thousand dollars that I saved when I was in the army.

SMITH: But why did you. . . .

JESSIE (*interrupting*): Wait a minute. I was so glad when your money ran out and we could live even for a week on mine. I was so proud of it. Don't go and spoil it for me. Tomorrow Macpherson'll read your book, and you'll be rich again. But today you're poor, absolutely poor, and absolutely mine. If you only knew how sweet that is. But that's something only a woman can understand.

SMITH: I love you more and more every day. And today it seems I couldn't love you more than I do.

JESSIE: Today? But tomorrow? Tomorrow you must love me still more.

SMITH: Tomorrow? Yes, perhaps tomorrow I shall love you still more, if only. . . .

JESSIE: Only what?

SMITH: If only you don't go and leave me tomorrow.

JESSIE: What's that you're saying, are you crazy? What's the matter? You've tears in your eyes. You're tired. You're just tired out. (*Prevents him from rising, kneels before him, pressing herself to him.*) What's that you've got into your head? Where would I ever go away from you? (*Jumps up.*) Quick, come and look at the way I've got everything ready. (*Pulls him out of the armchair, takes his hand, leads him to the door, and opens it. Through the door—the dining room. Inside it in the background a festively decked dining table is visible.*) How do you like it?

SMITH: Very much.

JESSIE (*closes the door and begins to walk up and down the room arm in arm with Smith*): You—one; me—two; Meg—three; Preston—four. Then there's Fanny Bridge and another one of my old friends—Sally Hopkins—I don't think you know her.

SMITH: No, I don't.

JESSIE: I don't even like her very much. But she was always so sensible and criticized me so, I wanted her to come today so I can show you off to her. That's six. Gould—seven. I know you don't like him so much. . . .

SMITH: No, it's all right.

JESSIE: But I invited him on purpose. He's always so patronizing about you, especially when you're not there. Let him come and see how fine we live together. A hundred times better than he and his rich hag there in San Francisco.

SMITH: Will Bob be here?

JESSIE: Of course. He's the eighth and last. Today when Meg went to New York with your book, I told her to dig him up wherever

he might be and bring him back with her. (*A pause.*). Harry!

SMITH: What is it, dear?

JESSIE: What's wrong with you? What's happened? Is something worrying you? What's bothering you? Tell me.

SMITH: No, nothing. Nothing at all. I guess I'm just tired out. (*Goes to the glassed-in wall of the veranda and looks out into the garden.*)

JESSIE: Yes, I quite forgot. You see that bit of ground from the pear tree and beyond with the hill and the three pines?

SMITH: Yes.

JESSIE: It's pretty, isn't it?

SMITH: Yes.

JESSIE: It's nearly a quarter of an acre. I spoke to Mrs. Hodson today—it's her land. She says that she can sell it to us, and pretty cheap, too. When you get the money for the book, we just must buy that land. Then our garden'll look quite different. O.K.?

SMITH: O.K.

(*The bell rings.*)

JESSIE: Thank heaven, that must be Meg and Bob. (*Kisses Smith and runs out. Smith stands motionless, still staring out of the window.*)

JESSIE (*runs in. She is holding a carton over a yard long*): It's come. Here, take this and go and change at once.

SMITH: What's that?

JESSIE: That's my surprise for you. I gave Meg the money for the tailor so as to get your new suit. Here it is. Go and try it on. Only hurry. I want to see you in it. Go along, go, go. (*Almost pushes him out. Enter Meg and Murphy.*)

MEG: I did all you asked, and even sat at the barber's while Mr. Murphy shaved and had his hair washed.

JESSIE: Thank you, Meg. And you, Bob, honest, you could have come without washing your head. You'd have been here sooner.

MURPHY: No, I couldn't. I only washed my head to sober up.

MEG: And had it washed *twice*, please note.

MURPHY: Yes, twice. The barber washed it, dried it, and combed my hair. But I felt it wasn't enough, and told him to wash it again. He tried to argue, but I told him it was none of his business and I'd have it washed five times if I wanted.

JESSIE: You're feeling gay today. Maybe you'll brighten Harry up a bit.

MURPHY: All right. You know I can't refuse you anything—you or Miss Stanley.

MEG: Only don't mix *me* up in this.

MURPHY: Why? Ever since we agreed to leave politics alonewe've got along splendidly. You even drank whiskey from my flask today.

JESSIE: Meg, what's this I hear?

MEG: I was driving and it was cold, and his pocket's always bulging with those flasks. Why, are you sorry now that I deprived you of a mouthful of your whiskey?

(*Enter Smith, in a navy blue suit.*)

JESSIE (*twirling him round*): Let's see you. Fine! Look, though, Meg, here at the back—don't you think it wrinkles a little?

MURPHY: That's the way they're being worn now.

JESSIE: You keep quiet! Your things all look on you like on a clothes hanger anyway! What do you think, Meg?

MEG: Seems all right to me.

SMITH: Say, how long are you going to keep turning me round? I'm not a spinning top!

JESSIE (*scolding*): And of course your tie's under your ear, as usual. (*Fixes his tie, then stands on tiptoe and kisses him.*) I'm just kidding, you've tied it fine today. I just did it in order to kiss you without anybody seeing. (*To Meg and Murphy*) You didn't see anything, did you?

MEG:
MURPHY: } No, we didn't see a thing.

JESSIE: Meg, come with me, we've a hundred things to fix.

MURPHY: Wait a bit. Look at the surprise I've brought for Harry. (*Fumbles in his pocket, pulls out a newspaper, and unfolds it. Something can be seen in large letters, covering the whole sheet.*)

JESSIE: What's that?

MURPHY: Macpherson's Sunday supplement carried a whole page devoted to (*nods at Smith*) our honoured friend here. It tells the world what a work of genius his book's going to be, and how talented he is, how objective, how honest, what a wonderful cover it's going to have, and most important of all, how inexpensive it's all going to be. Now what do you think of that?

JESSIE: Very impressive.

MURPHY: And what's more—all this without reading the book. That's a thing that happens once in a lifetime!

SMITH: Yes. . . .

MURPHY: His name's in two-inch type.

JESSIE: That's just grand. I never thought there'd be anything like that. And you, Harry?

SMITH: I didn't think it either. I mean, I didn't quite realize. . . .

JESSIE: There now, you see, and you've been in the dumps all day. Cheer him up a bit, Bob, or I'll be angry with both of you. Come along, Meg. (*Exit both.*)

MURPHY: I see my surprise isn't much to your taste.

SMITH: Not very much, to tell the truth.

MURPHY: Why?

SMITH: That's a long story. (*A pause.*) Though I can tell it to you in a word. It's this way, you see, the book I've written isn't a bit like the one they're expecting.

MURPHY: What?!

SMITH: Just what I say. It's not that book at all. (*Picks up the paper Murphy brought.*) The Russians want war? Well, I've replied in the negative. The Russians don't want war.

MURPHY (*delighted*): Fooled them! Goddam you, that's fine! Has Macpherson got the book?

SMITH: Yes, he's had it for four hours now.

MURPHY (*laughing*): I can just imagine it.

SMITH: What?

MURPHY: I can just see Macpherson's face. (*Glances at the newspaper.*) "Harry Smith, well known for his objectivity and honesty." (*Laughs*) I wonder how they'll manage to switch over into reverse now?

SMITH: I don't know. At first I didn't

think it would go so far, and especially I didn't expect that damned advertisement.

MURPHY (*thoughtfully*): But you know, old chap, it's going to be bad for you.

SMITH: Not so good.

MURPHY: You . . . have you really written a book that's absolutely no good to Macpherson? Maybe. . . .

SMITH (*interrupting*): In the Russian question there's no "maybe" and there can't be. It's either "yes" or "no". Macpherson wanted a "yes", and I've said "no". That's all.

MURPHY: No, it's not all. There's the contract.

SMITH: Well, what about it? I shan't get another cent out for it.

MURPHY: That's not all. They may try to make you cough up what you got.

SMITH: To hell with that. It makes no difference, I'm a beggar anyway. Pay it back or not, when all the installments fall due at once, none of this'll be mine. Beginning with this house, and ending with the car that brought you.

MURPHY: Wait a bit. But what about some other publisher?

SMITH: I've thought of that. No good. Macpherson, or rather his publisher Kessler's got a contract with me with a guaranteed two-year period for publication.

MURPHY: Well?

SMITH: Well, and that's all.

MURPHY: But if they refuse it and return the book?

SMITH: They wouldn't think of it. Why should they? On the contrary, they'll not refuse it and not return it, but just keep it for two years and not publish it. And I can't take it anywhere else either, because for the next two years it's their property. And in two years it'll be too late to publish it . . . that's not like a novel or a book of poems, it's reporting, the sort of thing that's dead in six months.

MURPHY: Wait a bit—did you realize that when you started to write it?

SMITH: Yes, in general I did.

MURPHY: Then why the devil did you want to start such a useless business, where there's no way out? You've written the book, and you can't even get it out, only a few of your own friends'll ever read it. How the hell could you do it?

SMITH: I don't know. I could do that and I couldn't do anything else. It was too much for me. In Russia I suddenly felt I was ashamed of myself, of you, of all of us, ashamed that we make all America swallow that crap (*seizes the paper*) every morning with their breakfast. This "Russian question" stopped being only a Russian question long ago. It's a touchstone for honour and honesty all over the world. I remembered that I'm a man. Yes, a man, and not just Macpherson's employee. And once there was a time when I was young and honest. And finally I remembered that I'd got an old mother who taught me a few things when I was a child, a crusty, honest old American woman who still reveres Abraham Lincoln more than Hearst. . . And I wrote that blasted book. And even if only half a dozen of my friends read it, even so I don't regret it. I've had enough of leaving all the honesty to the Communists. Let them say I'm not Left enough all they want—to hell with them, but they won't dare call me dishonest now.

MURPHY: Well, the thing's done, anyway.

SMITH: You don't agree with me?

MURPHY: I don't know. But I'm feeling pretty bad. And I'm just so plain disgusted with myself that, honest, if that blasted crate I'm going to fly in on the tenth goes to pieces in the air—I don't think I'll be very sorry. Just the opposite.

SMITH: Stop talking nonsense.

MURPHY (*after a silence*): And what about Jessie? Doesn't she know anything yet?

SMITH: No, nothing.

MURPHY: She's so happy here with you in your home.

SMITH: For God's sake shut up. Let me wait till tomorrow without thinking of that. (*A pause.*) A cigar?

MURPHY: Thanks. (*Both light up. A long silence. Both listen to the rattle of dishes. Suddenly Murphy jumps up.*)

MURPHY: Hold on a bit.

SMITH: What?

MURPHY: Wait a bit. Idiots. We're idiots. There *is* a way out. There is!

SMITH: Don't be a fool. What way out can there be?

MURPHY: No "can be" about it. There's one already. (*Seizes the newspaper.*) This advertisement! All New York knows about your book. This'll be a real scandal.

SMITH: Well, and what's the use of that?

MURPHY: How d'ye mean, what? It'll be a first-class scandal. That ass Gould who's always in a rush advised Macpherson to hint in the advertisement about the anti-Soviet contents of the book. I can see his hand here. Good for him! That'll just cook their goose.

SMITH: How?

MURPHY: Simple enough. Such a grand scandal'll mean huge sales for the book. Kessler's just an ordinary business man, he's only interested in dollars. For a few extra hundred thousand he'll sell out Macpherson and publish your book alone. He'll get out his own advertisements and on the dust-cover he'll print the whole story of how the book was ordered, Macpherson's refusal to print it, all the details. All New York'll be talking of it for a week at least. You get me?

SMITH: I'm beginning to. . . .

MURPHY: God, it's a grand idea. Who's your contract with? Kessler alone?

SMITH: Yes, Kessler alone.

MURPHY: That means Macpherson's just as big a dope as Gould. He can't do a thing. And Kessler'll agree to everything. He'd walk across the Sahara if he could smell dollars on the other side. He'll be giving a dinner in your honour. Harry, get out the whiskey or I'll take back every word I've said!

SMITH (*pouring whiskey into two glasses*): Is it really true?

MURPHY: I'll give up drinking if it isn't.

SMITH: Why such a terrible pledge!

MURPHY: I'm not afraid, I'm risking nothing. Bottoms up! (*Both drink.*)

SMITH (*thoughtfully*): Is it really true? Really?

MURPHY: Let's have another drink on it. (*Pours out whiskey.*)

(*Enter Jessie.*)

JESSIE: That's disgraceful, Bob. Why are you drinking now?

MURPHY: Why are we drinking? Because everything's going to be fine. Goddam fine, eh, Harry?

SMITH: Yes.

MURPHY: Jessie, give me your hand quick. (*Takes her hand and Smith's.*) Make a ring Harry, take her other hand.

JESSIE (*laughing*): What's got into you? I don't understand a thing.

MURPHY: Never mind, you'll understand later on. (*Dancing and stamping, begins swinging them round and singing: "Who's afraid of the big bad wolf, big bad wolf, big bad wolf".*) Right, Harry?

SMITH (*enthusiastically*): Who's afraid of the big bad wolf, big bad wolf, big bad wolf! (*All three, dancing gaily, sing in various voices: "Who's afraid of the big bad wolf, big bad wolf, big bad wolf." The veranda door opens. Gould stands in the doorway, in a raincoat, hatless. He is very pale. A long silence.*)

GOULD (*agitated*): Harry, I can't understand a thing, but Macpherson rang me up, he was furious, and said I was to bring you along right away, dead or alive.

(*General silence.*)

Curtain

ACT III

SCENE I

Macpherson's office, as in Act I, Scene I. Night. Two hours later.

GOULD (*in the doorway, letting Smith enter first*): Come in. (*Continues standing in the doorway, speaking to somebody in the other room, evidently a secretary*): And when will he be back?

WOMAN'S VOICE: He didn't say. He only said you were to wait in his office.

GOULD: O.K., we'll wait. (*Closes the door, sits down.*) We'll wait. (*A pause.*) His voice sounded like he was mad clean through. I know his voice very well. And he doesn't usually hang up half way through a sentence.

SMITH (*mockingly*): Mr. Editor of the *San Francisco Herald*. I see that all the same old habits are strong, and you're still afraid of the chief.

GOULD: Sixty per cent.

SMITH: Why just sixty?

GOULD: Because he still holds sixty per cent of the shares in my paper. Holds them and won't sell them, the old bastard, although I've tried to get them through dummies three times. (*Silence*) What's wrong? Why's he mad? Maybe something's changed, and he wants a book just the opposite of yours?

SMITH: I think you've hit on something near the truth.

GOULD: You do? What's happened? While we were driving here, I was thinking over all the international telegrams. Nothing there. Nothing at all. Well, why don't you say something? What are you thinking about? After all, it concerns you, too, damn it.

SMITH: Yes, maybe you're right, it concerns me too. And even a lot more than you. Keep calm, there's been no changes in world politics. It's a much smaller matter. It's just that I wrote an honest book about Russia and answered the question—do the Russians want war?—in the negative.

GOULD: So that's it. . . That's fine. . . .

SMITH: I don't know. You know better.

GOULD (*unexpectedly*): No. He couldn't have had time to read it.

SMITH: One chapter's enough.

GOULD: Wait a bit. You're just fooling. You're pulling my leg, aren't you?

SMITH: Not now. All this month, yes. But not now.

GOULD: You're serious?

SMITH: For the last five minutes, I've been speaking absolutely seriously. Come down to the bar for a minute. It's always better to have a drink before a big row.

GOULD: A drink? Do you know what you've done? What's hanging over you—and me too, for that matter?

SMITH: Of course. That's why I'm inviting you to have a drink. (*Takes money from his pocket.*) I've still got a whole seven dollars. Let's go.

GOULD: Go to hell.

SMITH: You're not so far out. I've fooled you a bit, it's true, but you were in too big a hurry with that premature advertisement. That was one of your most fantastic and most unsuccessful ideas. In general, I beg your pardon for causing you trouble. And come and have a drink while I've still got some money.

GOULD: Trouble? My trouble's nothing to what yours is going to be. Think of your own troubles, before it's too late.

SMITH: It's too late now.

GOULD: No, it's not. I don't know what you've written, but I know that ten days is enough to turn the whole thing inside out like a glove. I'll talk the chief round. He'll agree.

SMITH: He will, but I won't.

GOULD: Don't be an idiot. I'm talking to you as a friend.

SMITH: No, you're talking like a man who's sold advice successfully all his life. And you don't want to ruin your reputation. You persuaded the chief to make me a scoundrel. And since that's so, even if it's ten days late, all the same I've got to be one. But I'm not going to. You and Macpherson call yourselves enemies of Russia. But that's only a quarter of the truth.

GOULD: And the other three-quarters?

SMITH: That you're enemies of America. You want to get ten million Americans back

into uniform. And to muzzle all those who oppose you. But it won't work.

GOULD (*coldly*): First, from tomorrow on you'll be broke.

SMITH: Maybe.

GOULD: Secondly, sooner or later Jessie'll leave you.

SMITH: Maybe. But it's not worth talking about that just now.

GOULD: Yes, it is.

SMITH: No, it isn't.

GOULD: I'm speaking as your friend—yours and hers.

SMITH: Keep quiet. And not another word about your friendship. I know all about everything between you two in Australia. And that's enough of that.

GOULD: You know? She told you?

SMITH: No. I know it without that.

GOULD: And she—does she know that you. . . .

SMITH: Of course not. If a woman's got a black spot in her life (*jerks his head at Gould with open mockery*) and especially one like this, a decent man never reminds her of it. (*A pause.*) Keep away from me. I won't stop at a fight. I'll just simply kill you. Better sit down. That's right. And I'll sit down too. (*Both sit down.*) To tell the truth, I haven't liked you for a long time, Jack Gould. Not since the days when we were at school together. I don't like you because it's easier for your sort than for mine to live in my country—and I've got a sort of feeling for it, in spite of your being in it. I don't like you because you laugh at honesty, and because I'm ten times more talented than you are and a hundred times poorer. I don't like you because my wife was once your mistress—not because she loved you, but because you always manage to buy a house cheap just when the owner's died, and to get a woman cheap when she's lonely. And I don't like you because you think it's just natural for a man to be a scoundrel. And still more because you nearly made me one. We won't tell any more lies about friendship, Jack Gould. We're two different men, two different Americans, if you like. (*Rising.*) I'm going for a whiskey. Alone. To tell the truth, I don't even want to treat you with my last money. (*Exit.*)

(*Gould alone, still thunderstruck, sits in the armchair, then whistling thoughtfully, rises and takes a few steps up and down the room. Macpherson enters quickly.*)

MACPHERSON: Hello. Where's Smith?

GOULD: Gone down for a drink before seeing you.

MACPHERSON (*pushes a button. A secretary appears in the doorway*): Smith's down in the bar. Send him up to me.

(*Exit secretary.*)

GOULD: Well?

MACPHERSON: You know already?

GOULD: Yes, he's told me.

MACPHERSON: You're expecting me to give you hell?

GOULD: Yes.

MACPHERSON: You're wrong. When a man listens to an idiot's advice, he's a double idiot himself, and he's only himself to blame.

GOULD: Thanks.

MACPHERSON: You're welcome. Tomorrow you'll transfer that thirty thousand paid for the advertisements at your risk, from the common account to mine. And I shan't have any more to say about the question. I didn't send for you to give you hell, I've already taken all measures so that there's no way out for Smith but one—to sit down and rewrite the book. But if—it's not very likely, but if he refuses, we'll have to have another book for the elections.

GOULD: You want me to. . . .

MACPHERSON: No, you write too badly. Dennis Mitchell's down in Florida now, resting after his trip to Europe. He's been to Russia twice and written practically nothing. He could sit down and write all that we want from Smith, dated six weeks back.

GOULD: But Dennis Mitchell—I know him well—he's another of Smith's sort. . . .

MACPHERSON: Exactly. That's why I need him.

GOULD: But. . . .

MACPHERSON: He may cut up rough? That's why I need you. Go home and get ready to fly to Florida. I've ordered a ticket. When I've spoken to Smith I'll call you up whether you're to go or not. I need that book on Russia, Jack. We'll hit all our radicals with it, from the *Daily Worker* to the *Chicago Sun*. All of them. But don't you be fooled—they're much stronger than they seem. We've got to hit them now, before it's too late. Once there was only one Communist in the French Parliament, too. (*Presses a button. Enter the secretary.*) Where's Smith?

SECRETARY: He said he'd finish his whiskey and come.

MACPHERSON: Very good. I'll wait. (*Exit secretary.*)Well, how are things with you in San Francisco? I think you flew there?

GOULD:Yes. All right, not bad. (*A pause.*) When I came, I expected you to be blazing. But you're almost in a good mood.

MACPHERSON: I've got over it. So things aren't bad with you in San Francisco? By the way, yesterday Griffiths asked me to sell him part of my shares in your paper. What do you say? Would he suit you as a new shareholder?

GOULD: Well, what shall I say? (*A pause, he looks carefully at Macpherson.*) Griffiths? Well, I don't think I'd advise it. Keep the shares yourself.

MACPHERSON (*laughing*): Good for you. Never mind, Jack, don't lose hope. You'll be sitting at that desk some day. (*Nods at his editor's desk.*) When I'm dead, if I die before you, of course. And that's not likely. All the same, you've got more sense than one would think to look at you. After some racking of my old brain I finally guessed that Griffiths was buying the shares for you, but you guessed that I'd guessed. Good for you. Quits. Well, go along. It's late. If you've got to fly, the plane takes off at six in the morning. Get your ticket from Miss Bridge. I'll call you up. . . .

GOULD: Goodbye. (*Exit, colliding with Smith in the doorway.*)

MACPHERSON (*glancing at his watch*): How do you do, Harry, sit down.

SMITH: Thanks. (*Sits down in an armchair by the table.*)

MACPHERSON: I've read four chapters of your book. Four out of. . . .

SMITH: Ten.

MACPHERSON: Read them with great interest. I like surprises . . . in literature. But unfortunately, not in politics.

SMITH: Why? It has recently been looking as if you'd started liking surprises in politics, too.

MACPHERSON: Yes, when they come from me, but not when I get them. You evidently haven't noticed that small but important difference, and that was just where you made a mistake.

SMITH: What I wrote wasn't a mistake. It's what I think now.

MACPHERSON: Evidently. But I'm never interested in what my correspondents think. Let them think what they like. I'm interested in what they write. In a word, I don't want to interfere in your private business or even know what you think. I don't want to pry into your thoughts. I'm not a young man and I haven't the time to tell everybody my ideas separately. I do that for several millions at once every morning with my papers. Read them carefully. That's the only advice I can give you. But now I've got a few words to say to you on business, strictly on business. You wrote a book which doesn't suit me at all and which I can't publish. Isn't that right?

SMITH: That's right.

MACPHERSON: You received an advance of seventy-five hundred dollars, but as the contents of the book was not agreed upon, from the legal point of view, it would be difficult for me to sue you. Of course, you deceived me, but that's a moral question and I shan't touch it. Well, if I don't publish your book, I shall lose seven and a half thousand dollars advance payment, thirty thousand that I've spent on advance advertisements, and a hundred thousand that I expected—I won't conceal it from you—to make on your book. That's a hundred and thirty-seven and a half thousand dollars in all. But that's not all. Your book was to have a certain political effect, and political effects, too, mean money in the end—otherwise I wouldn't be running a paper, but a suspender factory. Well, say another hundred thousand. But that's not all yet. The scandal with the book that's advertised and not published—that means more dollars—loss of prestige, the fight with the Leftist papers' campaign and so on and so forth. Say three hundred thousand dollars in round figures, and we won't be far out in reckoning the losses I may suffer if your book doesn't appear. You see I'm being frank with you. Right?

SMITH: Well, go on.

MACPHERSON: When you took my seven and a half thousand dollars and then wrote something I didn't want, maybe you thought I'd get after you like a man who's lost seventy-five hundred dollars? Wrong. You didn't understand. I shall get after you like a man who's lost three hundred thousand because of you. And that'll be a good deal worse. To put it plainly, I'll just wipe you out. You get me?

SMITH: I get you.

MACPHERSON: And now let's think how to avoid it both for me and for you. I can only guess how the book goes on, but I read the first four chapters carefully and I think it wouldn't take more than four days to change them thoroughly. That means ten days for the whole book.

SMITH: I can't alter my book.

MACPHERSON: I thought of that. Of course, that's true. It's difficult when you've just finished a book to change it over yourself. I've found a man who'll do it for you. All you'll have to do is let him consult you—transcription of names, towns, dates, figures, and so on. Of course, his work'll be charged against you—that'll cost you about two thousand.

SMITH: Wait a minute. . . .

MACPHERSON: But that's not all. You'll have some more money losses. The printshop'll start on the bock ten days late—you'll have to pay about three thousand for these ten days. So two and three and seven and a half advance from your contract thirty—you'll still have a good sum left—seventeen and a half thousand dollars. Not so bad. (*Holds out a sheet of paper to Smith.*) Here, take this.

SMITH: What's that?

MACPHERSON: This is your authorization to make any corrections in the book which I consider necessary. It's already typed out. You've only got to sign.

SMITH: I won't sign that.

MACPHERSON: Think it over again.

SMITH: I've done all my thinking.

MACPHERSON: Never mind. Think some more.

SMITH (*rising*): No.

MACPHERSON: Good. I've warned you straight of what's coming to you. It's going to be just too bad for you, and worse than that. But remember, when you're right down, when you're turned down everywhere and you've got nothing to eat, you can come back here, to the paper. You'll come and I give you my word I'll take you on again. Of course, I shan't make you a department editor, or a correspondent either. A reporter? No. I shan't take you as a plain reporter either. I'll take you on as a police reporter. Ten hours a day in police court for thirty-five dollars a week. And all your life in front of you. Not so bad. I started with that myself once. Of course, I was sixteen then, and you're thirty-nine. But that's nothing. Never too late to begin your life anew. Goodbye, Harry, pleasant thoughts.

SMITH: Goodbye. (*Turns and goes to the door.*)

MACPHERSON (*after him*): Don't forget, I'll help you when you're down. You'll be my police reporter. (*Smith turns, and Macpherson, meeting his eye, suddenly breaks off and yells, thumping the table with his fist.*) You will work for me as a police reporter!

(*Smith turns away and goes out, banging the door behind him.*)

MACPHERSON (*sitting down calmly at the table and dialing the telephone*): Hello, Gould? It's me. Get ready. You'll have to fly to Florida.

Curtain

SCENE 2

The bar, as in Act I Scene 2. Twelve o'clock the next day. Smith, wearing his blue suit, is sitting alone in an armchair in the foreground—as in Act I Scene 2. The same barman, and people passing to and fro in the background—nothing has changed. Smith smokes in silence, looks at his watch, Preston comes through the street door on his way to the restaurant. He noticed Smith. For a second he seems to make a move towards him, stops, then swiftly goes to the restaurant door. When he is nearly there, Smith turns round and notices him.

SMITH: Preston!

PRESTON: How do, Harry!

SMITH: Have a whiskey with me?

PRESTON (*undecidedly*): I'd like to, but . . .

SMITH: But you're in a hurry? I've noticed that everybody seems to be in a hurry today.

PRESTON (*approaching*): Well, I'll be an exception, then. And why do you think everybody's in a hurry today?

SMITH: I don't know. It just seems like it. Maybe I've got sort of suspicious. (*To the barman.*) Two whiskeys.

PRESTON: You're evidently thinking. . . .

SMITH: We're evidently thinking of the same thing. Well, how about it, have I got to get used to everybody being in a hurry?

PRESTON: Well, how shall I put it. . . .

SMITH: How? Honestly.

PRESTON: Yes, I guess you'll have to. If I know Macpherson, it's going to be just too bad for you.

SMITH: Well, we'll see. (*Barman brings the whiskeys.*)

PRESTON (*picking up his glass*): Well, here's hoping. (*Drinks.*) I've got to go. As far as I'm concerned, I really do have to hurry. I hope you believe me?

SMITH: Almost. The usual rush of telegrams about Russia? A Russian broadcasting station in the crater of the Vesuvius, eh?

PRESTON: Yes. But your irony's addressed to the wrong quarter, Harry. I don't get a cent for all that. And goddam it, man, Russia won't be one cent better off if Dennis Preston's without a job. Goodbye, Harry. I really am in a hurry.

SMITH: Goodbye. (*Sits alone for some seconds. Murphy enters quickly.*)

MURPHY: At last I've found you.

SMITH: Hello, Bob.

MURPHY: Idiot. Don't you know you've got a wife? What do you want to make her crazy for?

SMITH: I couldn't go home, Bob.

MURPHY: Why?

SMITH: Because (*looks at his watch*) I've got to see Kessler first. After the talk I had with Macpherson, I've got to see the publisher at once. I've got to know what to say at home.

MURPHY: You don't need to know anything. I've told her. Done it all for you.

SMITH: You told her?

MURPHY: Yes, I did. Meg and I. We told her everything. (*Silence.*)

SMITH: And what did she say?

MURPHY: She? She said "Oh. . ." And then she said: "Bob, get out the car quick and let's go and look for that idiot."

SMITH: How did she say it?

MURPHY: Idiot? Quite tenderly. Like this (*imitating*)—idiot.

SMITH: Where is she?

MURPHY: Now? I don't know. She, Meg and I went off at once to look for you in different directions. But she'll be here in half an hour. This is where we agreed to meet.

SMITH: If she only understands—nothing worries me, if only she sticks by me. Do you think she can understand, Bob?

MURPHY: I don't know. Like all failures, I always try to expect the best.

SMITH: Kessler's coming any minute. I didn't sleep all night—I was just plain scared of this talk with him. He's late for some reason.

MURPHY (*rising*): Never mind. Everything'll be all right. The main thing for him's the money, and that's a sure thing here.

SMITH: No. Don't go. I want to talk to him with you here, and then if everything falls through, at least we can have a drink at once. Have you any money? I'm broke.

MURPHY: I've got some. Five minutes ago I got the second quarter for my flight.

SMITH: When's it going to be?

MURPHY: Monday a week. But this evening I shall fly to Missouri for training. (*A pause.*) And here's Kessler. (*Kessler appears in the doorway.*)

SMITH: How do you do, Mr. Kessler. I've been expecting you.

KESSLER: Good morning. Sorry I'm late. I had to attend to something urgent on the way.

SMITH: Let me introduce you.

KESSLER: We already know each other. (*To Murphy.*) Ten years ago I think I published a book of yours. The last one. Isn't that right?

MURPHY: Yes. You're right. The last one, I guess.

SMITH: I don't think Mr. Murphy will be in the way.

KESSLER (*indifferently*): Not at all. Well, what is it?

SMITH: I have a contract for a book with you.

KESSLER: Yes. (*Takes out the contract, puts on his glasses.*) A contract with me through Macpherson. He guarantees any possible losses, pays the advertising and receives fifty per cent of the profits.

SMITH: But legally the contract is with you. The right of publication belongs to you.

KESSLER: Yes, to me exclusively.

SMITH: Then here's what I want to say to you. . . .

KESSLER: No need. I know it all.

SMITH: All?

KESSLER: Yes. I know that you've written a book which is just the opposite of the one Macpherson expected from you. That's what you wanted to tell me, isn't it?

SMITH: Yes. But if I give you the book, you can publish it whatever its contents. There's nothing said about the contents in the contract, is there?

KESSLER: Yes. I can do that.

SMITH: And Macpherson can't stop you?

KESSLER: Legally—no.

MURPHY: After that advertisement Macpherson put out, it'll be a first class scandal. You'll make a hundred thousand extra on it. You can't tell me that's not right.

KESSLER: A hundred thousand? Yes, I guess it'd be no less than that.

MURPHY (*eagerly*): Well, there you are. You say yes. (*Nods at Smith.*) He says yes. And to hell with Macpherson. Well—is it a go?

KESSLER: I'm sorry, but it's not.

MURPHY: Why not, goddam it?

SMITH: Wait a moment, Bob.

KESSLER: I'm sorry, but I have to refuse your offer.

SMITH: Now listen here, Mr. Kessler, do you, you yourself, really want so badly to have another pack of lies printed about Russia? Four years ago you printed my book on Russia. I assure you that this one is no worse.

KESSLER: I'm quite ready to believe you. But all the same, with the greatest regret, I have to refuse your offer.

MURPHY: God, that's dirty business!

KESSLER: I knew why Mr. Smith wanted to see me, and I knew that it was no use, but all the same I came because of my regard for Mr. Smith and his talent.

MURPHY: All right, all right, I apologize.

KESSLER: Don't mention it. . . I've already published not one, but three of your books, Mr. Smith, and I would be glad to publish your fourth book—if I could.

MURPHY: Then what's the matter? You're a businessman. What does the contents of the book matter to you?

KESSLER (*continuing*): And I would even take greater pleasure in publishing your book as you've written it, than as Macpherson advertised it. My parents came from Mogilev, Mr. Smith. Perhaps you didn't know that. And I have a certain personal feeling for Russia, because my father and mother were born there. I'm an old man, but that means something to me still. During the war I gave two thousand dollars for parcels to Russia. Yes. And I say again, I would publish your book with the greatest pleasure if it didn't involve greater losses for me than I can stand.

MURPHY: But you've just said yourself that it'd bring you an extra hundred thousand.

KESSLER: That's quite correct. But the loss would be very much greater. I'm an old man, I'm troubled with asthma, I may die any day, and I don't want to take any extra ill-will with me when I go. I'm going to explain everything to you, Mr. Smith, so that you won't think too badly of me. Only I wish your friend wouldn't interrupt me.

MURPHY: O. K. I'll keep quiet.

KESSLER: At ten last night Macpherson rang me up and said: "Kessler, I'm coming to you right away."

MURPHY (*to Smith*): At ten. Sent Gould to you, and himself. . . .

KESSLER (*looking reproachfully at Murphy*): He came to me and without explaining anything asked me to sell him all rights in your book, right away and for a pretty good price. But I'm an old hand in publishing and I thought: Why's he doing this? If he expected to lose on the book he wouldn't try to buy me out. That means he expects to make on it. Then better that I should make a profit on it myself. And I refused outright.

MURPHY: Good man!

KESSLER (*looking reproachfully at him again*): This morning, after you rang me up and I promised to meet you, Macpherson rang me up again and said: "Kessler, I came to you, now you come to me." I went. He was sitting at his desk with advertisements and catalogues of my publishing house all round him. "Now see here," he told me, "today or tomorrow Smith's coming to you." And in a couple of words he told me all that had passed between you. "You want to buy me out again?" I asked him. "No," he said, "I don't want that any more. I lost my temper yesterday. I'm not going to buy the publishing rights from you, but I warn you straight: God help you if you publish that book." I asked him why. "Because I've sworn that that book's not coming out," he said. "And if I publish it all the same?" I asked. "In that case it'll be just too bad for you," he told me. Then he picked up all my catalogues and sheets lying on his table and said: "You can make two hundred thousand on Smith's book. Is that right?" "Right," I said. "But besides that, judging by your catalogue, you're expecting to publish thirty-seven books this year. Isn't that right?" "It is," I told him. "Well," he said, "on Smith's book you'll make an extra hundred thousand, but I warn you, all my thirty-eight papers will give each of your thirty-seven books the worst reviews they can. And on all those thirty-seven books you'll lose five times as much as you make on Smith. I'll ruin you if I have to ruin myself doing it."

SMITH: Well?

KESSLER: Well what? Wait a bit, let me get my breath. (*A pause.*) This damned asthma. Well, then he said goodbye and gave me the sweetest of his twelve smiles and wished me all health and happiness. (*A pause.*) And that's all I wanted to tell you. (*Looks round.*) If it's not too much trouble, would you give me my hat, I find it difficult to stoop down. (*Smith picks up Kessler's hat which has fallen from the chair and gives it to him.*)

KESSLER: Thanks. I'm very sorry. (*Rises.*) I would advise you to make it up with Macpherson. But I have known him for forty-two years and judging by his face this morning I'm afraid it's too late. Goodbye.

SMITH: Goodbye. (*Follows the old man, mechanically opens the door for him, returns and sits down. A long silence.*) Well, what are we going to do now?

MURPHY (*taking out a bundle of money*): Harry.

SMITH (*seeing the money*): What? A drink? No, I feel too bad for that. I don't want to drink.

MURPHY: No, just take it.

SMITH: What for? Where did you get that money?

MURPHY: I told you, I got the second quarter for the flight.

SMITH: I'm not taking it. Put it away.

MURPHY: Don't be a son-of-a-bitch. There's three hundred here. That'll do you for a couple of weeks. Take it, if it's only for Jessie's sake. So that she doesn't feel it all at once (*Pushes the money into Smith's pocket.*) She'll have to get used to it gradually.

SMITH: To what? Poverty? She should never have stopped being used to it. And I let her. Coward. What did I hope for? Why didn't I tell her the truth at once, when I came back? I wanted to put it off. I've been such a swine to her, Bob, such a swine. (*Thrusts his hand into his pocket hurriedly.*) Three hundred, yes?

MURPHY: Three hundred.

SMITH: I've been living a week on her money already. How much do you think my suit might cost?

MURPHY: Tailored?

SMITH: Yes.

MURPHY: Two hundred.

SMITH: That thousand dollars that she's saved all through the war. I tell you, honest, that's worse than death.

MURPHY: Stop it, don't dare to speak of anything like that. We'll think something up yet.

SMITH: What?

MURPHY: I don't know. Something. (*A pause. He fumbles in his pocket and takes out more money.*) Here, here's another twenty dollars, don't get it mixed up with the other. When I go up, buy some flowers with it and give them to Meg from me. Only don't forget. See, I'll put it in this pocket. (*Pushes the money into Smith's breast pocket.*)

SMITH: Why me? Buy them for her yourself, today.

MURPHY: Me? I'm scared of her. She'd look at me like this (*imitates*), and say I'd better give it to the Left trade unions. You'll buy her the flowers? Sure?

SMITH: Sure. (*Jessie appears in the doorway. She looks round the bar, sees Smith and Murphy and makes for them almost at a run.*)

SMITH: Jessie. (*Takes her hand and holds it without raising his head.*)

JESSIE: Lift your head up.

SMITH: I can't.

JESSIE: Lift it up, I tell you. (*Smith raises his head, and she kisses his eyes.*) Now why are you looking so glum? Everything's gone wrong? Yes?

SMITH: Jessie. . . .

JESSIE (*almost sternly*): Don't. I love you and I'll try to be strong enough so that . . . so that everything'll be all right. Bob, order drinks. With soda for me.

MURPHY (to the *barman*): Three whiskeys and sodas.

MEG (*entering*): Four. (*Comes up to the others and sits down.*) Well, how's things?

MURPHY: Miss Stanley, my idea with Kessler's fallen flat, now we'll have to hope something comes of yours.

MEG (*boldly*): Well, and so it will. (*Murphy brings the whiskeys from the bar. Meg takes a glass resolutely.*) To a long journey (*drinks*)—that's what you always say, isn't it?

MURPHY: I think so.

MEG: To your book, Harry. Now my tongue's free, I can say at last that you've done a fine job.

SMITH: Don't, Meg.

JESSIE: Why not? I hope we'll be able to read it now? It's not a secret any more?

SMITH: You're angry with me?

JESSIE: Very. But all the same, I'm glad to know that at any rate it's a fine job. (*To Meg, hysterically.*) Fine?

MEG: Fine.

SMITH: Jessie!

JESSIE: Well? The idyll's ended, Harry. Life's starting. And I may sometimes have bits of bad temper. But that doesn't matter. I guess in the end I'll be able to keep myself in hand.

MEG: Listen.

SMITH: What?

MEG: I've thought of something. In a week Williams is coming back from Europe.

SMITH: Well, and so what?

MEG: You started out with him. You make ten big articles out of your book, and he'll print them. Of course, a Leftist paper can't pay a lot of money, but it's better than nothing. Isn't it?

MURPHY (*eagerly*): Sure.

MEG: What? You keep out of this, you old newspaper bandit. I'm not asking you, but Harry.

SMITH: If he'll take the risk. . . .

MEG: Williams?

SMITH: Yes. I'm beginning to doubt everything, or nearly everything. No, Williams —I guess he'll risk it. Yes, of course he will. (*A pause.*) Jessie!

JESSIE (*rousing herself from her thoughts*): What, dear?

SMITH: He'll risk it, sure he will.

JESSIE: That's grand.

SMITH: What's grand? Didn't you hear me?

JESSIE: Yes.

SMITH: How do you mean, yes?

JESSIE: Yes, I heard you.

SMITH: What's biting you, Jessie? (*Almost shaking her by the shoulders.*) Jessie.

JESSIE: It's nothing, dear. I just suddenly remembered how happy I was yesterday, at ten o'clock in the evening.

Curtain

SCENE 3

Smith's home, as in Act II, Scene 1. Ten days later. Smith's study now looks very strange. The desk is taken apart and stacked up in the corner. The divan is also taken apart—its back and seat, roped together, are standing against the wall. On the walls everything is the same—two or three pictures, a Mexican runner hanging over the place where

the divan used to stand. The reading lamp plugged into the wall is standing on the floor. The radio set is also on the floor and the highstand from beneath it, is standing beside it. Only the two armchairs and the small table in the foreground are still in their old places, and one or two chairs by the back wall. The dining room door is open, and two silent packers from a furniture firm continually pass to and fro, carrying various things out—evidently from the upper floor.

Smith, wearing his old dark suit, is sitting in one of the armchairs. On the table stand two glasses and an open whiskey bottle. Silence. Jessie enters from the veranda with a basket in her hand.

SMITH: Where've you been?

JESSIE: I found twenty wild strawberries. Look what fine ones.

SMITH: What for?

JESSIE: I don't know. (*Empties the basket indifferently out of the window.*)

SMITH: Jessie, have you seen the radio program?

JESSIE: I'll find it. (*Looks through a pile of magazines, books and newspapers heaped up by the wall.*) Why do you want it?

SMITH: Today the Mercury Company's broadcasting a talk with Bob on board the plane.

JESSIE (*giving him the paper*): Here it is.

SMITH (*thumbing through it*): From WHIF. (*Switches on the set, tunes in the station, soft music.*) No, nothing yet. (*A long pause.*) Williams should come any minute now. Meg rang me up that he was on the way.

JESSIE (*indifferently*): That's grand.

SMITH: What do you think, will anything come of it?

JESSIE: I don't know, dear. I don't know anything any more. (*Puts her arms round him from behind, and kisses his head.*)

PACKER (*appearing in the dining room door*): Excuse me, but I've got to take the wardrobe from the bedroom, and there's things hanging there.

JESSIE: I'll be right along. (*Kisses Smith again on the head and goes out.*)

RADIO VOICE: Hello, everybody. This is the Mercury Company calling. One hour ago the attempt to break the world altitude record, by a sports plane with a passenger on board, began. The plane is a Hutchison model. The motor is a Malstrom. Our correspondent Bob Murphy is on board. We will speak to him every fifteen minutes. Hello, Bob!

MURPHY'S DISTANT VOICE: Hello!

ANNOUNCER: How high up are you now?

MURPHY: Can't make anything out on this blasted indicator. I think it's seven thousand six hundred. No, eight six hundred.

ANNOUNCER: Are you in an oxygen mask?

MURPHY: Yes. I could do with a drink, but this oxygen mask rules that out.

ANNOUNCER: What can you see underneath?

MURPHY: I'm glad to say, only clouds.

ANNOUNCER: Why are you glad?

MURPHY: Because yesterday it was forty-six years I've been seeing the earth every day, and I've got sick and tired of it.

ANNOUNCER: Well, so long, Bob. We'll have another talk in fifteen minutes.

MURPHY: Goodbye. It's damned cold.

(*Music. Smith shivers and pours out a glass of whiskey. Meg appears in the doorway, followed by Williams.*)

MEG: How do, Harry. See, I've brought you Williams.

SMITH (*rising*): How do, Meg. How do, Fred. Sit down. (*Mechanically gestures towards where the divan used to be, sees the empty place, hesitates moves an armchair forward.*) Here you are, and you, Meg, sit here. (*Moves forward the second armchair.*) And I'll take this chair. (*Sitting down as he speaks.*) I expected you three days ago, Fred, when everything was decent here. They only started taking the furniture today. Please excuse me.

WILLIAMS: Installments?

SMITH: Yes. They offered to postpone payment for a month, but I told them I wouldn't have the money in a year.

WILLIAMS: And the house?

SMITH: The house—tomorrow. That's why they're getting the furniture out in such a hurry. There'll be someone else in here tomorrow. (*A pause.*) I'm really sorry, Meg, that you didn't come a minute sooner. They were just broadcasting Bob speaking from the plane.

MEG: I know. I tried to get it in the car, but I'd forgotten the station.

SMITH: WHIF.

MEG: What did he say?

SMITH: The usual thing, that it's damned cold and that he wanted a drink. (*A pause.*) Well, Fred, shall we have a drink first, to old times, or shall we get right down to business?

WILLIAMS: Business right away, unfortunately. I just carved out a couple of hours between two press conferences.

SMITH: Well, what's the odds? (*To Meg, who has suddenly risen.*) Where are you going, Meg?

MEG: I'm going to Jessie, to have a look at her, because Williams is in a hurry, and he's got to take me back to New York.

SMITH: Yes, of course. I've got no car now.

(*Exit Meg.*)

WILLIAMS: Well, shall we have a whiskey, all the same? Eh?

SMITH: Sure, we'll have a drink. (*Pours out the whiskey, but neither drinks.*) You've got much older, Fred, in these six years.

WILLIAMS: Well, you've not got any younger yourself.

SMITH: That's true. Let's see, we've known each other since '28.

WILLIAMS: Right, when the office was still on Astor Place.

SMITH: Yes. . . Well, let's get down to business. You've probably heard the story of my book.

WILLIAMS: Yes, I have.

SMITH: For two years Kessler's got all publishing rights on it, that is, actually, Macpherson has, and in two years, of course, it'll be dead—it's reporting. You understand?

WILLIAMS: I understand. What's your proposition?

SMITH: I'll divide up that book into ten parts and rewrite them as newspaper articles. It 'll be just the same thing, but the text 'll be different and legally Macpherson can't take me to court on it.

WILLIAMS: I see. . . .

SMITH: That 's all. You run them in your paper, and your readers 'll like them all right. I'll vouch for that.

WILLIAMS: I too. But. . . .

SMITH: But what?

WILLIAMS: All right. We'll talk straight. Tell me, have you been reading my paper this past month?

SMITH: Not very often. I've read practically nothing at all this past month.

WILLIAMS: But you've heard of the howl that was raised against me a couple of months ago?

SMITH: More or less. Something about money from Moscow and that sort of crap.

WILLIAMS: That crap cut my circulation by twenty thousand. It all started as though someone had touched a button, in ten different papers on the same day. There was Hearst, and MacCormick, and your Macpherson—the whole pack. Within three days I was a Communist, a bad American and a paid agent of Moscow running a paper on Russian money. And the reason—a series of my own articles from Europe—on popular democracy in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, just honest, objective articles—and that was all. But it was quite enough for all that followed.

SMITH: They've gone crazy.

WILLIAMS: I nearly went down. I haven't changed my sympathies, but the last month whenever anything touches on Russia or the Balkans I've had to mark time. But even that gets them all mad, and Macpherson first of all.

SMITH: In a word, you're hedging. Do you think that's the best way out?

WILLIAMS: Not the best, but the only possible one just now.

SMITH: The only possible one?

WILLIAMS: You tried to find another. Well?

SMITH: I haven't got my own paper.

WILLIAMS: And if you had, you'd have lost it quick. (*With sudden asperity.*) To hell with you, Harry. It's a fight. And a tough one. And sometimes you've got to retreat, and wait, and be patient.

SMITH: But maybe you'll think of old times when we were young, Fred, and risk it? (*A packer comes and stands behind Smith—he needs the chair on which Smith is sitting, and stands, hesitating. Smith turns, rises quickly. Williams watches in silence.*)

WILLIAMS (*after a pause*): No, I shan't risk it. At another time—yes. But just now—no.

SMITH (*without sitting down*): As you like. Then there's nothing more to talk about. Let's drink to our old age. A stealthy thing—don't have time to look round and it's there. Have a drink.

WILLIAMS (*rising*): I don't want to drink to that. We'll relive the old days sometime.

SMITH: Hardly, Fred.

WILLIAMS: Well, all right. Then I'll tell you everything. Three days ago I met Gould in the club, he took me off into a corner and in his usual cynical style gave me a message from Macpherson: "We've heard that Smith wants to come out in your paper. Your own business, but remember that if you print his stuff then what we wrote about your Moscow connections will be only a foretaste of what you'll get. We'll put you on the spot and good American dollars will get us a dozen witnesses to swear that with their own eyes they saw you taking this mythical Moscow money."

SMITH: And you didn't knock him down?

WILLIAM: No. Unfortunately I was forced to swallow it.

SMITH: Don't worry. I'll do it myself first chance I get. And then it'll be his turn to swallow it.

WILLIAMS: Well, after all, you've nothing to lose.

SMITH: And you?

WILLIAMS: I can lose my paper.

SMITH: You've lost it already.

WILLIAMS: That's not true. I've preserved it. And those mongrels have never been able to make me print a single word of slander against Russia and not one lying word about a future war. They haven't and they won't. No matter how they try. But that's all I can do. For the present. It's hard times, Harry. One has to be patient.

SMITH: Well, if there's nothing else left to do. . . Don't be angry, Fred, I understand you, but that doesn't make it any easier for me.

(*Meg appears in the dining room door, followed by Jessie.*)

MEG: Well, everything settled?

SMITH: Yes, everything's settled.

MEG: Tell me!

SMITH: Fred'll tell you on the way. He's in a hurry, he's got a press conference. (*Remembering.*) Excuse me, Jessie, this is Fred Williams. My wife.

JESSIE (*shaking hands*): You'll have to excuse us—(*laughs*) we're in a bit of a mess.

WILLIAMS: Goodbye.

SMITH: Goodbye, Fred. Meg, don't forget to listen in the car when Bob speaks.

MEG: I won't. I'm awfully glad you've settled everything with Williams.

SMITH: So am I. Wait a bit, Meg, I was to give you something from Bob. But I've forgotten what. . . .

MEG: What was it?

SMITH: No, I've forgotten. Well, never mind. I'll think of it later. Tomorrow. I'll remember it.

MEG (*kissing Jessie, quietly*): I told you everything would be fine. See you tomorrow, Harry. (*Exit, followed by Williams. A long silence. Jessie looks hard at Smith.*)

JESSIE: Nothing doing again? That right?

SMITH: Yes.

JESSIE: I thought as much, for some reason. (*The radio breaks off music, crackles again, making both jump.*)

ANNOUNCER: Hello, everybody. This is the Mercury Company. We're going to speak to our correspondent Bob Murphy again. . . How high are you now, Bob?

MURPHY: Ten three hundred. Shaking a lot.

ANNOUNCER: How is the Malstrom motor working?

MURPHY: Since we haven't fallen yet, it's evidently working well.

ANNOUNCER: You seem to be in good spirits?

MURPHY: Yes, I still can't see the ground, and if only your voice didn't come butting in, I'd think that I was alone with the gods.

ANNOUNCER: In fifteen minutes we'll call you again, Bob.

MURPHY: O. K. (*Music.*)

SMITH (*after a silence*): I wonder if poor Meg's really going to be happy at last?

JESSIE: And Bob?

SMITH: I think that old press bandit's begun to thaw too.

JESSIE: Well, good luck to them. (*A long silence. Throughout the following scene the packers are gradually carrying furniture out of the study.*)

(*An automobile horn. A taxi-driver appears in the doorway.*)

DRIVER (*To Smith*): You sent for a taxi?

SMITH: A taxi? I haven't sent for any taxi.

JESSIE: I sent for it. (*To the driver.*) Wait a minute. I'm coming right away. And there's a suitcase in the hall, take it to the car, please. (*Exit driver. Silence.*)

SMITH: You're going away?

JESSIE: Yes.

SMITH: For good?

JESSIE: Yes.

SMITH (*taking out cigarettes and offering Jessie one*): Smoke?

JESSIE (*taking a cigarette*): Thanks.

SMITH: Shall we sit down a minute?

JESSIE: All right. (*They sit down in the armchairs opposite each other.*)

SMITH: It's good you're going today.

JESSIE: Why?

SMITH: Everything at once. (*A pause.*) I expected it. I knew that's how it would be.

JESSIE: I wasn't lying to you nine days ago. I really did think I'd be strong enough to stand by you.

SMITH: And you aren't?

JESSIE: No.

SMITH: You're right. I deceived you.

JESSIE: No. But . . . oh, don't talk to me in that voice, as though I didn't love you. I do love you. And this taxi, so suddenly. . . That's because I love you, too. It's got to be quick, sudden. Or, I couldn't do it, I'm not strong enough. I made up my mind to leave you three days ago, you know when?

SMITH: That morning when we were at table? Right?

JESSIE: Yes. I began to yell something about money, and then I stopped, and I knew then that I'd got to leave you. Before it was too late. And please, please forgive me for yelling at you then.

SMITH: But it was only once. . . .

JESSIE: All the same I don't want it. Not even once. And if I stay with you it'll be every day. Well, why don't you say something?

SMITH: What's there to say?

JESSIE: Yes, that's true. Though why? You could say that it was mean to desert you when you're poor and unhappy, though when you're poor and unhappy I'd only be more trouble. And the longer it went on, the worse it would be. I know myself. I've got to go. (*Rises—looks silently at Smith for a long time, then suddenly drops to her knees by his chair, pulls down his head and kisses his hair.*) My grey head, my handsome boy. (*Releases his head, takes his hands, looks at them for a long time, then presses her lips to them.*

SMITH: Jessie.

JESSIE (*without releasing his hands, in a muffled voice*): Don't stop me. I love your hands. Strong hands, large hands, good hands. (*Speaking to the hands*). Forgive me. (*Rises and again sits down in the armchair.*) So you see, Harry. Well, what do you say to me?

SMITH: Nothing.

(*Both packers approach their chairs from behind, Smith and Jessie instinctively look round and rise simultaneously. The packers take the chairs.*)

JESSIE: Goodbye, Harry. (*Holds out her hand to him.*)

SMITH (*taking her hand, very calmly*): Goodbye.

(*Jessie makes a convulsive movement towards him, but meets his eyes. He is looking at her with cold, fixed eyes. And seeing those eyes, Jessie turns sharply and goes. Smith stands motionless. He hears the scrape of gravel. The car is turning. An automobile horn. He still stands in the same position. A packer approaches.*)

PACKER: The table.

SMITH: What?

PACKER: The table.

(*Smith glances at the table, sees the bottle and two glasses standing on it, picks them up and looks around the room—nowhere to put them. The room is absolutely bare, only the radio set stands in the corner. Smith goes up to it and places the bottle and glasses on it. At the same moment the announcer's voice is heard.*)

ANNOUNCER: Hello, everybody. This is WHIF. . . We shall now speak to our correspondent Bob Murphy again. . . Bob!

Bob! Can you hear me well?

MURPHY: Badly. The plane's rattling like the devil.

ANNOUNCER: How high are you?

MURPHY: Seventeen thousand one hundred.

ANNOUNCER: Congratulations. There's only a trifle left to succeed.

MURPHY: What? I can't hear you.

ANNOUNCER: What do you say about the quality of the Hutchison airplane?

MURPHY: Quality? Must be good, if we've got so high. But just now it's shaking and rattling, I can't hear you properly.

ANNOUNCER: Bob! Bob! Bob Murphy!

MURPHY: Wait a bit. The pilot's showing me something.

ANNOUNCER: Bob! Can you hear me?

MURPHY: I can hear you, God damn you. It looks like . . . it looks like everything's going to hell. We're breaking up. . . We . . . the dev. . . .

(*Absolute silence in the room. Smith stands, his hands covering his eyes, then slowly drops them, feels in the breast pocket of his jacket, takes out twenty dollars, speaks quietly, without any expression.*)

SMITH: I remember. For flowers.

(*Enter Hardy quietly, in overcoat and hat. Sees Smith, takes off his hat. Stands in silence, then coughs. Smith turns.*)

SMITH (*expressionless*): How do, Hardy.

HARDY: How do.

SMITH: How are you—how's the family?

HARDY: All well, thanks.

SMITH (*indifferently*): I'm glad. You've come to earn your ten dollars for today?

HARDY: Maybe even twenty. After all, it's no ordinary scandal, this of yours.

SMITH: Not quite ordinary. Yes, maybe you're right.

HARDY: Listen, don't be mad at me. If it's not me then it'll be someone else, it'll be in the papers anyway. And I thought, then why not me—after all, we're old friends. Won't you do it for me?

SMITH: Of course.

HARDY: Just answer a few questions.

SMITH: All right. Only you write badly. You've got a bad style. I'd like your stuff to be written well, even if only once in your life. Get out your notebook, I'll dictate it myself.

HARDY: But. . . .

SMITH: It'll be well written, and maybe then they'll pay you an extra five dollars for that.

HARDY (*taking out his notebook and holding his fountain pen ready*): I'm all set.

SMITH: Write, then. (*Dictates, walking up and down the room.*): Today I visited the notorious Harry Smith, a former Macpherson employee. He tried to fight Macpherson and was thrown off the paper. He wanted Kessler to publish his book, but Kessler refused. He wanted to print it as a series of articles in Williams' paper, but Williams didn't want to take it. He has lost peace of mind, comfort, home, car and money. His friend has died and his wife left him. When I came to him, I was forced to write standing up—he could not even offer me a chair, because all his furniture has been taken away. There are rumours that in a few days he will go back to work on Macpherson's paper as a police reporter. But these rumours. . . These rumours are without foundation. The aforementioned Smith does not intend to retreat. He is mad as the devil, clean through, as his dead friend used to say. The aforementioned Smith will not go to work for Mr. Macpherson as a police reporter, he will not hang himself, or cut his throat, or jump from the twentieth floor. The aforementioned Smith, on the contrary, intends to try to begin his life anew.

Why have you stopped, Hardy? Go on writing. I've not finished yet. The aforementioned Smith intends to make the attempt to establish finally whether a man who was born an honest American can live honestly in the land of his birth. Yes, yes, write it down, Hardy, write it down. Though to hell with you, for that matter! If you don't write it, then I shall write it myself, and in the end I'll find a place in America that'll print it. For a long time the aforementioned Smith naively thought that there is one America. But now he knows—there are two. And if, fortunately for him, yes, fortunately for him, there is no place for the aforementioned Smith in the America of Hearst, then he'll find himself a place in that other America—the America of Abraham Lincoln, the America of Roosevelt!

Curtain

Translated by Eve Manning and Sergei Kozelsky

ALEXANDER TVARDOVSKY

DEATH AND THE HERO

(From the poem *Vassili Terkin*)

From beyond a distant hillock
Came the battle's din and glow,
But our friend Vassili Terkin
Lay alone upon the snow.

And the snow was stained with scarlet
Where the wounded hero lay.
Death came stealing like a harlot:
"Come on, soldier, come away.

It is time that you were going—
Let me lead you through the gale,
Blizzard blowing, blizzard blowing,
Blowing snow across our trail."

Terkin started as he lay there,
Scarcely breathing in the snow:
"Who invited you, you hussy?
I'm alive. I will not go."

Death detected some misgiving:
"It's no matter how you strive—
You cannot be counted living
Just because you are alive.

I have touched you with my shadow;
Even now you are too weak
To be conscious that the snowflakes
Lie unmelting on your cheek.

Do not fear the dark before you—
Night is just as good as day."
"That's all right, but what, you whore, you,
Would you like to have me say?"

This remark, so unexpected,
Disconcerted her a bit:
"What I'm asking," Death reflected,
"Is a trifle, you'll admit.

Just a sign that you are willing
To submit to my demands,
That you're sick and tired of living—"

"In a word, throw up my hands?"
Death considered, drawing nearer;

"Well, why not? I'll take the blame."
"Nothing doing, Life is dearer."

"Silly boy, it's all the same.
If you want it or you don't,
All the same your hands are blue,
All the same your sight is failing,
Lips are paling—"
"Go away!"

"See how quickly night is falling,
Why prolong your misery?
That's the reason I am calling—
Get it over—come with me."
"I will stay."

"Don't be foolish—you are freezing.
You will not survive the storm.
Let me wrap you in my blanket
And forever keep you warm.
You believe me. You are crying.
Your submission makes me bold.

"Don't you trap me with your lying!
I am crying from the cold!"

"Tears of joy and tears of pain—
All the same! On the plain
Night is swiftly drawing near;
They will never find you here.
And even if they found you,
Would your happiness increase?
Once again your cares would hound you—
Better lie and die in peace."

"You are trying to ensnare me."
Terkin's jaw was firmly set.
"I must live. You cannot scare me.
I have hardly lived as yet."

"If you live—what then? What of it"
She was bending to his ear.
"If you do—you think you'll love it?
Love the cold, the dirt, the fear?
Life is not a bed of roses,
Think of everything once more—"
"Think of what? It's all familiar.
You forget that this is war."
"Once again you'll have the worry
About homefolks, about home—"
"That's the reason I must hurry—
Kill off Jerry and get home."

"Home. Perhaps. If home were waiting—
If your home were still intact—
But except for bricks and grating,
All is ashes—that's a fact—
All in ruins—"
"I can build it,
I know how, and I am strong."
"The land is wasted."
"Once I tilled it."
"Pipes are twisted."
"Not for long.

'Jack of all trades'—so they called me.
Once I'm back, I'll mend the harm."

"You will—unless—don't interrupt me—
You will, unless you lose an arm,
Or in general are disabled—"

Terkin drew a sudden breath.
Was there nothing that enabled—
Man to triumph over Death?—
He was ready for submission —
Worn and weary, night at hand—

"Listen, Death, on one condition,
I'll transfer to your command."

And the boy, where he lay bleeding,
So alone, so young, so weak,
Started quietly to speak,
In a tone of earnest pleading:

"I'm no better than the others,
I can die as well as they,
But when all the fighting's over,
Will you free me for a day?
So that I may be in Moscow
For the victory salute?
So that I may hear the salvo
That the Moscow guns will shoot?
While the rockets still are flaring,
May I hurry home to see
How the village folks are faring?
They will be expecting me.
And when friends come out to meet me
At some old familiar spot,
May I answer those who greet me
With a word?"
"You may not."

Terkin shuddered as he lay there,
Yet some strength seemed to revive.
"Get away from me and stay there,
I'm a soldier still alive!

I will yell until I'm blue,
I may perish on this hill,
But I'll never yield to you
Of my own free will!"

"Take it easy. By succumbing
You will only prove the rule—"
"Stop! They're searching! Someone's coming!
It's the medics!"
"Where, you fool?"
"There!" His eyes were shining.
Death went weak with laughter then:
"That's the squad that comes to bury!"
"Just the same, they're living men!"

One came over, then another,
With a crowbar and a spade.
"Here's another stiff to cover.
We won't finish, I'm afraid."

"Have a seat upon this body.
All my bones, I think, are broke."
"If we can't fill up our bellies,
We at least can have a smoke."

"How'd you like a sup of something—
Cabbage soup with cream on top?"
"How'd you like a sip of something?"
"I'd be willing—just a drop."
"Maybe two—"

Suddenly they seemed to hear
Someone say, just audibly:
"Drive this Jane away from here!
I'm alive, as you can see."

Up they jumped from off Vassili,
Had a look—alive all right!
"Can you beat it?"
"Now we really
Must get back before the night."

"Just to think of him surviving!
Quite a marvel, on the whole!
Not so strange to find a body,
But a body with a soul!"

"Once his soul is whole—come on!
Got to give the guy a hand.
We had almost passed him on
To the Ministry of Land."

"Get your spade without delaying,
He is frozen to the spot.
Chop his coat off."

Death was saying:
"I will follow. Like as not
They will jerk him or will drop him,
And I'll have him back again.
Some new accident may stop him.
From escaping with those men."

Both their spades and both their belts—
Both their coats laid end to end—
"Come on, soldier, lift the soldier."
"Off we go! Have patience, friend."

Slowly, carefully they bore him,
Trying hard to ease the ride.
He looked happily before him;
Death kept trailing to one side.

What a road they had to cover!
Ruts and rocks and drifts of snow—
"Why not rest a little brother?"
"That's all right. We better go.
Night is coming. Don't you bother
About *us*," the soldier said.
"You can bet we'd ten times rather
Lug a live one, than a dead."
And the other said: "That's right.
And besides, it's understood,
That a live one must keep going,
While a dead one's home for good."

Now it seemed the wind was easing;
Less relentless grew the storm.
"Lost your gloves? Your hands are freezing.
Here, take mine, they're nice and warm."

As she listened, Death kept thinking:
"What a friendly lot they are!"
All her hopes were quickly sinking:
"There's no sense in going far.
I can see they'll never let him
Go away with me today.
It's a pity not to get him—"
And she sighed and turned away.

Translated by Margaret Wettlin

LIFE COMES TO THE DONBAS

The Battle Begins

After a search that took me all over the plant I finally located Engineer Andreyev, director of the Stalino Iron and Steel Works. He was making his usual morning tour of inspection and when I reached the open-hearth department where my search began, I was told he had been there an hour before. He was not in the blast furnace department either. Someone had seen him over by the east gates. And so, off I went on his trail.

I soon found myself at what must have been the very hub of the works, at the intersection of a maze of railway tracks where locomotives hauling huge ladles of metal and slag puffed back and forth day and night. The clouds of smoke and steam that enveloped the scene lifted for an instant, and I beheld Andreyev standing on top of a pile of blooms beside the railway tracks. He wore a white shirt open at the neck, and his sleeves were rolled up to the elbow.

What struck me was the expression on his face. He was staring straight in front of him as if spellbound. What did he see? Locomotives hauling huge ladles of metal moved past him, panting heavily; on his right rose the building of the rolling mill, on his left, the new air-blower station. And over all towered the blast furnaces—two of them working, the rest still encased in timbers. An ordinary factory landscape, one which, doubtless, the director had seen thousands of times before.

And it was not until much later, when I came to know Andreyev better and had heard the story of the battle that had been fought for these furnaces, for that air-blower station, for the rolling mill, that I understood why this calm, grey-haired engineer, never given to raptures, cherished such a warm affection for this particular corner of the giant works.

II

"Well, and how is Old Hughes faring?"

"Old Hughes is about to celebrate his seventy-fifth birthday. He is hale and hearty, in fact, getting younger with years. . . ."

This conversation took place in March, 1946 in the Large Kremlin Palace between sittings of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. which had met to discuss the Five-Year Plan for the development of the national economy of the U.S.S.R.

It was Deputy Bardin, the Academician, who had once worked in the Donbas, that was inquiring after the oldest iron and steel enterprise in South Russia. The cheerful reply came from Deputy Andreyev, director of the Hughes plant, renamed the Stalino Iron and Steel Works.

In the long-range plan the Supreme Soviet adopted to guide the economic development of the U.S.S.R., and the lives and creative effort of millions of people, there was a certain passage that touched a particularly responsive chord in Andreyev's soul: "to restore the iron and steel works of the Donbas and the Dnieper areas, to put into operation 30 blast furnaces with a total capacity of 9 million tons of pig iron a year, steel capacities totaling 8.4 million tons, and 58 rolling mills."

These laconic figures meant everything to Andreyev, for they included the blast and open-hearth furnaces and the rolling mills of the oldest steel mill in the South, the plant which Andreyev, the engineer and the Bolshevik, was in duty bound to revive.

Among the deputies and guests at the session, Andreyev found many old friends with whom he had studied at the Mining Academy years before. And, as during previous visits to Moscow, he now looked in at the Mining Institute—Mining Academy it was called in the twenties—and at the Sickle and Hammer Works where he had first begun working as an engineer.

His student years, those years of his youth, had coincided with the youth of the Soviet Republic. Gay, splendid years they had been. He recalled the dormitory of the Mining Academy on Staromonetny Street, the rooms with the ascetically bare walls, the interminable impassioned arguments and discussions about the future. There, amid the haze of tobacco smoke, bold ideas were conceived, the destiny of an era was being shaped. Young and ardent, full of vitality and ambition, though poor and hungry, the students of the Mining Academy felt they were immensely rich and happy as they envisaged their country's future.

They were its future.

Children of the Revolution, these young, eager-eyed students in their Russian high-necked shirts or faded army tunics—relics of the Civil War days—had as yet little experience of life. Yet all of them were possessed with the spirit of the new—that most precious aspect of the era that had given them birth. Future engineers, geologists, metallurgists, miners, industrial executives, statesmen and poets—they transcended the narrow confines of academic curricula, as with all the fire and passion of youth they discussed the destiny of the century, the destiny of Russia, their own destiny. (Far into the night the young voice of Alexander Fadeyev, a classmate of Andreyev's, could be heard through the open windows of the student dormitory on Staromonetny Street reciting Blok's poem *The Twelve*.)

Three young engineers reported for work at the Moscow Sickle and Hammer plant in 1925.

For a long time the chief engineer twirled between his fingers the slip of paper assigning Andreyev to the plant.

"Does it really matter to you where you work—in an open-hearth shop or a sausage factory?" he inquired with a dry smile.

"I want to make steel!" Andreyev said. "Steel!"

"Well, try it," said the chief engineer coldly and sent him to the open-hearth shop.

But it was some time before he actually began to make steel. A young, inexperienced engineer, he went about the department watching the old, skilled workers perform their magic rites before the furnaces, and envying them from afar. For a long time he was given no opportunity to go near the furnaces. But one day when one of the skilled workers fell ill and there was no one to take the melt, the young engineer was permitted to take over one of the furnaces. He acquitted himself with honours.

So he learned to make steel. Ordinary steel. Then the time came when it was necessary to switch over to high-grade steel, to learn to produce it on a scale commensurate with the grandeur of the industrialization plans that had been launched.

In those years—the first years of the Stalin five-year plans—young Soviet engineers and skilled workers were being sent abroad—to America, to Ford's in Detroit, to the MacCormick plants in Chicago, and, in Europe, to the Krupp works. Andreyev landed in the sixth open-hearth department at Krupp's in Essen. There he met Ivan Tevosyan, a fellow student of his at the Mining Academy. In leather apron, with shovel and pick, Tevosyan worked at a furnace. Heavy, dirty work it was. But Tevosyan, whom the Germans dubbed "der schwarze Johann," laboured with frenzied zeal, as if he felt that every day, every second of his time spent at the plant was priceless. He was determined to learn all there was to know about steel-making, to wrest from capitalist technique everything of value it had to offer, and he advised his comrades to do the same.

And Andreyev soon realized that one had to work his way from the bottom up, to put his pride in his pocket, to forget that he had an engineer's diploma, that he was in charge of a department back home—forget all this, acquire patience, don a leather apron, pick up a shovel and gradually climb up the ladder.

When the day's work in the open-hearth department was over, Andreyev would change his clothes and go off to the laboratory or library, or would sit down to make notes. Now he was the engineer, eager, persistent, purposeful, anxious to assimilate the experience he was acquiring. He and the other young engineers lived in the warm, friendly atmosphere of the Soviet colony in Essen and followed the life of their own country through the terse telegraphic reports that reached them: the first experimental model of a 15-30 hp. tractor had been produced in Stalingrad; a site had been surveyed for a future plant in Chelyabinsk; geodesists had begun working at the foot of Mt. Magnitnaya.

Spreading out a map of their distant homeland, these young Soviet engineers would excitedly enter on it the sites of what were to become the first great centers of Socialist industry. Magnitogorsk and Kuznetskstroi were only just emerging from the blueprint stage, and it took them a long time before they could find Mt. Magnitnaya and that little Siberian town of Guryev in whose vicinity the foundations of one of the world's great plants were being laid. It was only several years later that one became accustomed to the words Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk, on the threshold of the thirties these words and all they stood for were only taking birth.

Now, as I write these lines in the year 1946, after a war that was the severest test of all our material and spiritual resources, and a conclusive demonstration of our strength and the decisive significance of Stalin's policy of industrialization, I recall a long-forgotten interview given by Henry Ford on June 17, 1930, the day the Stalingrad Tractor Plant went into operation. Speaking with the curt assurance of the successful businessman, he said that Russia was beginning to build, and in his opinion it made no difference what theory this upbuilding was founded on, since the facts would eventually speak for themselves. As a businessman, one of the captains of American industry, Henry Ford had no doubt that the facts would be staked against us; he was certain that the Russians would never be able to attain the high standard of modern engineering.

I shall take the liberty of digressing a little further to quote a statement made by another American, a surveying engineer named Swajan, an ordinary average American who came in close contact with the life of our country in those distant years of the first five-year plan. He took part in the building of the Stalingrad Tractor Plant. It was no doubt immaterial to Swajan, as an American to whom business was business, where he surveyed construction sites—in South Africa or on the banks of the Volga. A man who gave no thought to politics, Swajan did his work conscientiously and drew his pay regularly. The grey-haired engineer went about in a long coat with a roll of working drawings or a slide rule sticking out of his wide pockets.

I saw him at the Stalingrad Tractor Plant on June 17, 1930, when the first 15-30 hp. tractor came off the conveyor—the first of an endless stream of tractors that were to come off the assembly line at the rate of 50,000 a year. That day, speaking of these 50,000 tractors, Comrade Stalin spoke of them aptly as of 50,000 shells shattering the old bourgeois world in the Soviet village, and blazing a trail to the new, Socialist order.

I do not know what Engineer Swajan was thinking at that moment, what thoughts and emotions the sight of that first tractor clattering noisily over Soviet soil evoked in him. He stood gazing silently at the machine and at the people crowding excitedly around

it. A year later I met him at the Kharkov Tractor Plant, the day that enterprise was launched. Something had happened to the silent, reserved American. He, who had never given an interview to newspapermen, who had never addressed a meeting, now asked for the floor. He said that events like the launching of tractor plants cannot be measured in dollars and cents only.

"Rivers," he said, elaborating his thought, "that have flowed for centuries in their natural beds, change their course from time to time, becoming more useful for man. In the same way individuals, and nations too, sometimes make a supreme effort to improve their lives instead of just jogging along in the old way... Every nation has had its own mission in the past centuries of civilization's progress. Some in industry, others in politics, still others in art or in science. And it seems to me that the mission of the Union of Soviets is to show the world that there really is a better way to achieve the brotherhood of men."

This American had perceived that plants like the Stalingrad, Magnitogorsk, Kuznetsk and Chelyabinsk works were more than industrial enterprises producing machinery and metal; they were remoulding men and transforming a country. He had realized that these factories—iron and steel works, automobile and tractor plants—all served one and the same purpose: to rear our people in the new spirit and turn our country into a mighty industrial power.

Four years later, at a conference of iron and steel workers, Comrade Stalin (touching on general problems of metallurgy—this basic factor in national economy) summed up the accomplishments in the following brief words: "... We have won the most precious thing of them all—time, and built up what is most valuable for national economy—personnel."

In 1937, at a reception in the Kremlin for iron and steel workers and coal miners, Comrade Stalin proposed a toast to those on whom the production throughout our national economy depended—the intermediate and lower executives.

Engineer Andreyev, as chief of an open-hearth furnace shop, took part in the historic conference and the reception that followed it. That same year he was summoned to the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry and offered a new job, in the Donbas this time. He did not accept on the spot. He was too deeply attached to the open-hearth furnace shop he headed. After all, he had nurtured it for so many years. He knew it thoroughly from the foundations of the furnaces to the skylight. Most of all, he knew the workers, and the workers knew him.

The order appointing Andreyev chief engineer of the Stalino Iron and Steel Works had already been signed. But the People's Commissar who interviewed him waited patiently for his answer.

"You strike me as being a man of considerable experience," he observed. And, as if he divined the turmoil in the soul of the engineer at the prospect of being uprooted from familiar surroundings, he added: "Why not try something new?"

Something new... And so Andreyev went to the Donbas, to the Stalino Works, the oldest iron and steel plant in the South.

John Hughes was the first owner of the plant, Hughes, the enterprising English businessman, who received *carte blanche* from the tsarist government to exploit the Donbas,

"Today when I visit the old Hughes plant—the Stalino Works it is called now—I see no trace whatever of the plant I used to know," says Academician M. A. Pavlov in his book *The Reminiscences of a Metallurgist*.

When Pavlov, then a student at the Mining Institute, was sent to the Hughes plant for practical work in the eighties of last century, he saw there several small blast furnaces of a primitive type. Another student who likewise worked at the Hughes plant to acquire experience was the future Academician Grum-Grzhimailo. He climbed inside the open-hearth furnace that was being built at the time, to take measurements and make notes for his own working plan of a furnace.

Engineer Andreyev, a pupil of Pavlov (whose course in the metallurgy of iron he took) and of Grum-Grzhimailo (before whom he defended his diploma thesis), came to the ancient iron and steel works a half a century after his masters. By that time all that had remained of the old Hughes furnaces was a slight hump in the ground, marking the spot where one of them had stood. The plant had been rebuilt during the five-year plans. The chief engineer Andreyev's work was to continue the modernization of the open-hearth furnaces, converting them into up-to-date installations.

Andreyev threw himself heart and soul into this arduous and fascinating task. The main difficulty lay in the necessity of meeting the production schedule and reconstructing the furnaces at the same time. He laboured for three years along these lines, and saw the plant gradually changing before his eyes. The work demanded tremendous perseverance and dogged resolution, an infinite capacity for patient waiting until the time when the efforts and the means invested in the furnaces would begin to yield returns. By the beginning of the forties the plant was already turning out high-grade steel. It was thus that the war found it, and it went on producing iron, steel and rolled metal until the very end....

In October 1941 the front moved ominously close to the Donbas. Andreyev received orders to prepare the plant for evacuation. The equipment was to be shipped East, and whatever could not be moved was to be blown up and destroyed. That was the most trying period of his life. To have to destroy his own handiwork, the fruit of long years of arduous toil, was almost more than he could bear.

Train after train loaded with men and equipment rolled eastward. One and a half thousand workers of the Stalino plant went with their families to the Urals. For Andreyev these were trying times. Working at high tension, without pausing to rest, he went about doing the thousand and one things that had to be attended to before the final

order to abandon the plant and then—the most important job of all—to render the plant useless. Up to the very last moment, so long as the furnaces were still working, Andreyev and the workers cherished the hope that it might not be necessary to destroy them after all, that the front might withstand the enemy pressure. But the day came when Andreyev received a phone call from the regional committee of the Party. After a brief conversation he instructed the foremen of blast and open-hearth departments to put out the furnaces, close all vents and cut the blast.

Andreyev was going through the drawers of his desk when Tsarytsyn, foreman of the blast furnace shop, came in. On the table lay a pile of leatherbound notebooks. There was nothing Andreyev treasured more than these notebooks. In them, day after day, month after month, year after year, he had recorded the life of the plant, the entire fascinating history of its growth, of its every workshop.

He opened the top book and was reading the entries made on the day of his arrival to take up his post as the plant's chief engineer.

So engrossed was he that it was some time before he was aware of Tsarytsyn's presence. At last he looked up.

"What is it?" he demanded curtly.

With a gesture betraying his inner turmoil, Tsarytsyn said in his usual gruff voice:

"Well, we've done it! They're choking now. . . ."

He spoke of the furnaces as of human beings. Glancing over Andreyev's shoulder, he saw the familiar notebooks.

"Yes," said Andreyev following his glance, "I was just looking them over. We've accomplished a great deal, Alexander Nikolayevich. I recall how firm I was about that business of capital repairs when I took over."

Engineer Tsarytsyn, too, had his memories. He took a notebook out of his side pocket, a shabby, dogeared affair he always carried with him.

"Here's my life in a nutshell," he said with a wry smile, "That was a darn fine showing I made with No. 3 furnace, wasn't it?"

And they went on talking about the work of the plant, recalling its progress at different stages, as though they were preparing for some production conference, instead of being about to demolish in one blow that which had taken them years to build.

Left alone, Andreyev stared out of the open window. Suddenly a loud, piercing whistle rent the air and from the gloomy depths of the rolling mill a locomotive emerged, slowly picking up speed. It ran over the factory tracks, whistling as it went. Andreyev started. At that moment ear-splitting whistles sounded from all directions as if in response to the first locomotive. Oh, yes, that was the general signal to abandon the plant. His own orders, in fact.

Andreyev thought of the locomotives—young and old, smoke-blackened, grimy, low-slung, agile; they had served the plant well, had hauled innumerable ladles of molten metal, ore, coke and steel ingots. He heard the low, hoarse voices of the old-timers and the gay impudent pipe of the youngsters, the new engines glistening with fresh green paint as yet unsullied by grime. And suddenly all was quiet. The whistling ceased and only the heavy panting of the engines was heard as they clattered out of the factory yard enveloped in clouds of black smoke.

As he listened tensely to the slow diminuendo of the locomotive whistles, waiting for the moment when the sound would finally break off, he felt that something inside him must surely snap along with it.

"Pavel Vassilievich," came a voice behind him. "It is time."

He walked swiftly over to the window. Yes, it was time. . . .

He removed the plan of the factory layout from the wall and rolled it up. A light patch remained on the wall where the plan had hung. Waiting until the others had left the room he ran back to the window to cast a long last look over the factory. He stood motionless, almost fearing to breathe, and stared at the factory roofs gleaming with rain and at the blast furnaces that looked strange without the blue spiral of smoke above them. They were breathing their last slowly, and in the wombs of these mighty furnaces the metal lay slowly cooling, blocking up all the vents. It had taken seventy years to bring this plant with its splendid blast and open-hearth furnaces, its rolling mills, and air blowers into being, and now the fruit of the labour and thought of several generations, my very life and yours, it all had to be destroyed. . . .

In a few moments it all would be blown up, demolished, reduced to that much useless metal so that not a single gram of it should fall to the Germans.

The highway was jammed with trucks, cars, barrows, carts and even baby carriages. People walked or rode in silence, filling the road with a heavy, dense mass of humanity. Andreyev was silent throughout the journey. Seven kilometres out of town he stopped the slowly moving car and climbed up a hill beside the road to look back, perhaps for the last time, at the town, at his factory. From where he stood he had a good view of the town. Now and then tongues of red flame flashed through rents in the clouds and the dull thud of explosions sounded one after another. Thick clouds of smoke rose slowly over the factory buildings and the town. The coke-chemical plants! That dense black smoke came from burning benzol and tar. The earth shook and seemed to yield underfoot. The dull roar of the explosions echoed in Andreyev's heart. It was terrible to look at that grey gloom that hovered over the town, to hear the rumbling explosions, terrible to be standing there in rain and mud looking back at the distant factory left there deserted and dying.

III

Kuzma Grigoryevich Mogilevsky, chief of the designing office of the Stalino plant, left the town with the fourth evacuation train bound for the East. The plant archives—blueprints, drawings and plans which recorded

the entire technical history of the plant—had been entrusted to his care.

On the morning of October 7th, Andreyev had called him in and entrusted him with the task: to save the blueprints at any price.

"At any price, Kuzma Grigoryevich, you understand?"

"Yes, but where am I to take them?"

Andreyev did not reply immediately. He looked gaunt and his eyes were sad with weariness.

"Where?" he echoed, rising and going over to the map. "To the Urals, to the Serov iron and steel works."

As engineers, both men realized the vital importance of the undertaking: to save the blueprints meant saving the technical brain of the plant. They avoided words like "Germans" or "retreat". They could not bring themselves to think, let alone speak about it.

At noon the same day Kuzma Grigoryevich went to the station to see off his wife and daughter who were leaving with the third trainload of evacuees. Kuzma Grigoryevich sighed with relief as the train pulled out. Now that his wife and daughter were on the way to safety he could proceed to carry out Andreyev's orders with an easy mind.

The house he returned to looked strange and unfamiliar. The doors were wide open, bits of paper were strewn all over the floor, on the dining room table lay a dark blue scarf his daughter had forgotten, and there were patches on the faded wallpaper where the family photographs which his wife took along had hung for so many years. The empty walls of their abandoned house were depressing. How thoughtfully his wife had prepared everything for his departure. There was bread, dried fruit, rusks, a pile of handkerchiefs and several boxes of tobacco—all neatly wrapped up, ready to be packed away at the last moment. In his suitcase he found his coat, felt boots and fur cap still redolent of camphor. Kuzma Grigoryevich went over to the bookcase to choose a few necessary books from his extensive library. He had collected books for years, technical ones mostly. Now he picked out *A Course in Steam Engines*, a thick volume of graphostatics, *Designing and Planning* and nine volumes of *Machine Details*.

Presently old Sherudillo, the archivist, came in and helped him carry his baggage to the plant. On the way Kuzma Grigoryevich remembered that he had forgotten to close the door leading into the garden. He was about to return to the house but changed his mind—what did it matter now whether doors were open or closed. As they neared the plant Kuzma Grigoryevich found his energy returning to him. Old Sherudillo had a hard time keeping pace with him. Inside the designing office Mogilevsky felt quite well. This was where he belonged. These rooms with the filing cabinets, cupboards and shelves on which lay thousands and thousands of blueprints were his home.

Assisted by old Sherudillo and the draughtsmen, he worked all night long sorting and packing. Thirty-five thousand blueprints. Among them were some he had designed himself. His entire lifetime was here, beginning with the day forty years ago when he had first set foot in the department and taken his place at one of the drawing tables. He had started as a draughtsman, copying other people's ideas on tracing paper. After a while he became a draughtsman-designer, and gradually mastered the art of designing. Finally came the day when he began putting his own ideas to paper.

Just before dawn Kuzma Grigoryevich and Sherudillo stretched out on the packing cases to rest. Daylight was beginning to filter through the cracks in the blackout curtains. The archivist got up and, walking on tiptoe so as not to wake his chief, raised the blinds and opened the windows.

Presently the draughtsmen started to carry out the packing cases and cabinets and load them onto waiting trucks. And at last there came the moment when the two old men, Kuzma Grigoryevich and Sherudillo, remained alone in the now bare department. For a moment they sat, and suddenly Sherudillo, old grey-haired Sherudillo, fell on the shoulder of his chief and friend and wept bitterly. The walls of the designing department were bare and silent.

The freight car in which Kuzma Grigoryevich travelled with his blueprints was comfortable and well-equipped, with even an iron stove inside. After all, they were bound for the cold and windy Urals.

The fourth evacuation train was to have gone via Stalingrad but when it reached Likhaya station it was switched off onto another line leading to the Caucasus, for all the Stalingrad lines were jammed. Many of the evacuees left the train to make their way to Stalingrad by the nearest route and thence to the Urals. Kuzma Grigoryevich remained alone in his car with the thirty-five thousand blueprints which he could not leave to the mercy of fate. He was both surprised and touched when Eremin, from the construction department of the plant, came in and announced that he would accompany him. Eremin was a man of advanced years but Kuzma always called him tenderly Yosia.

The train moved along by fits and starts. After each run of several miles, it would stand for hours in the middle of the steppes. Confusion reigned on all sides. The lives of people, uprooted by the holocaust of war, lay before one's eyes. Mothers nursed their infants by the side of the railway track, children chased one another along the embankment, young girls braided their hair, someone sang a song, someone whispered words of love, and only the old folk sat on their bundles, staring up mournfully at the grey autumn sky.

Yet Kuzma Grigoryevich did not lose himself in the mass of refugees. He did not let his spirits sink at the sight of the suffering and misery around him. All his energy, all his efforts were concentrated on the task of protecting the precious property of his plant and delivering it to safety.

After seven days on the way the train reached Baku. But Kuzma Grigoryevich's troubles were not over. In fact they were just beginning. Colossal quantities of freights had

piled up in Baku. And more and more freights continued to pour in every day from the Ukraine and the Donbas to be shipped further by sea. Permission had to be obtained to load the blueprints onto a boat; Kuzma Grigoryevich had to find the man in charge of shipping and convince him that the packing cases entrusted to his care had to be saved. This was not an easy matter. Kuzma Grigoryevich found himself elbowed out by stronger and younger men with broad shoulders and loud strident voices. They banged their fists on the shipping chief's table, they pulled out impressive-looking documents, and, whenever demands and threats failed, they switched over to honeyed flattery. It was this sudden transformation from threats to flattery that surprised Kuzma Grigoryevich more than everything else. Those chaps certainly knew how to do it. They even changed their voices! He couldn't do it. He did not know how to threaten, he could neither demand nor cajole. Kuzma Grigoryevich marvelled at the way the shipping chief handled all these importunate people. Impervious to threats or flattery he made his decisions—negative or positive—quickly and firmly.

"Well, and what have you got?" he asked Kuzma Grigoryevich. "What valuables? People or materials?" He spoke hoarsely and very rapidly, and he took Kuzma Grigoryevich by surprise.

"Er . . . blueprints," he replied a trifle sheepishly. "Factory blueprints." He dug into the pockets of his coat and produced some sort of papers, but the official stopped him with a wave of his hand.

"What valuables, I ask?"

Kuzma Grigoryevich launched into a detailed account of his trials and tribulations: how he had set out with the fourth train and how the car had been switched onto the Baku line at Likhaya station. One thing emerged clearly out of his long and rambling story: Kuzma Grigoryevich had been left alone with his cargo of priceless blueprints. And at that moment, for the first time, a germ of doubt as to the pricelessness of his blueprints crept into his mind under the cold stare of this young man with the careworn face.

"Suppose we send you to the Urals alone and ship your papers on later?"

Kuzma Grigoryevich shook his head. "I and the blueprints," he said with dignity, "are one and the same thing."

"Had any lunch?" the official asked suddenly, reaching into the drawer of his desk for a sandwich.

Kuzma Grigoryevich thanked him. He had breakfasted earlier. The official bit into the sandwich, holding one hand on the telephone as if he expected it to ring at any minute, and studying the man with the grey, neatly clipped moustache before him.

"One and the same thing," he muttered and smiled, perhaps for the first time that day. "Connect me with the waterfront," he said into the receiver, and, taking the number of the car from Kuzma Grigoryevich, ordered someone to have the contents of the car loaded onto the "Komsomolets."

Kuzma Grigoryevich's thirty-five thousand blueprints went on board along with the valuables of the Rostov bank. The sailors who carried the cabinets onto the deck piled one on top of the other, attached a chain around them and lowered them into the hold as blandly as if they were handling sacks of potatoes. Kuzma Grigoryevich could not endure to see his precious blueprints handled so roughly. To the sailors it was cargo and nothing more. But to Kuzma Grigoryevich those cases and cabinets represented his whole life. One of the mishandled filing cabinets opened up and the blueprints dropped out. When the old man saw rolls of papers flying through the air he cried out in such anguish that everyone stared at him. The sailors in grey canvas overalls and their foreman, a short stocky individual with a bull neck who was supervising the loading, gaped at the sight of the scrawny old man running along the dock clasping a roll of blueprints to his chest and crying out in a thin reedy voice: "My God, what are you doing!"

The sailors rushed to pick up the papers just to console this queer man with the grey hair flying in the wind, and gently supporting him on both sides, they guided him up the gangway onto the deck of the boat.

In Krasnovodsk Kuzma Grigoryevich's cargo—thirty-five thousand blueprints—were piled up on the pier and covered with tarpaulin. It was still warm and Kuzma Grigoryevich and Yosia slept on top of their cargo. Kuzma Grigoryevich spent his days going from one railway chief to another, patiently explaining the importance of his freight. He felt that as soon as they would realize the value of the blueprints they would immediately place a car at his disposal. Or maybe two. But no cars were forthcoming. There were more urgent freights waiting for transportation. Before long, everyone knew him down at the port—the watchmen, dockers and dispatchers. Every morning he would appear in the doorway of the dispatcher's office and begin politely: "I have come to remind you . . ." But before he could get any further he would be forced to retreat before the words: "grain, oil, cotton."

Day after day grain, oil and cotton were loaded onto trains bound eastward. Kuzma Grigoryevich knew that these freights had to have priority over all others. One day the dispatcher pushed the latest war communique under his nose.

"See what's going on at the front and you go bothering everybody with your darn cases stuffed with papers. Who the hell needs those blueprints of yours now that everything's going smash. . . Chuck them into the sea and stop worrying about them."

The old man read the communique over and over again. Yes, the situation at the front was bad, very bad indeed. All that was left of the Donbas was a small slice of territory. The front was nearing Moscow. . . Kuzma Grigoryevich, a spare old man in a long coat, stood for a long time in front of a map of his native land, staring at the long tortuous line that stretched all the way across the country from the Arctic to the Black Sea. And standing there he wondered whether things could really be as bad as they looked, whether it was true that he and his thirty-

five thousand blueprints would never be of any use to anyone. But if everything was really going smash, as the dispatcher had said, what was the use of worrying about a batch of papers, what was the use of trying to get a railway car, what, indeed, was the use of living?.. He searched for and found on the map the town where the factory had been evacuated. How far it was from the front line! He had to stand on tiptoe to see that small black circle tucked away among the mountains of the Urals. But no sooner had he pictured for a moment the plant in operation, metal pouring out of the furnaces and tank steel smelting in the open-hearth ovens, than a heavy load seemed to fall from his chest and the assurance that he was still needed, he and his thirty-five thousand blueprints, took possession of him once more. Yes, he had to live to carry out the task the state had entrusted him with, to save the plant's blueprints.

Kuzma Grigoryevich realized that now when the situation in the country was so critical, oil, cotton and grain were of prime importance. But at the same time he did not lose hope that a car would ultimately be found for him. He had already ceased to dream of two cars.

By the end of the third week he got his car. It was attached to a super-urgent freight train—fifty-four oil tank cars, with Kuzma Grigoryevich's car trailing along behind as the fifty-fifth. Overjoyed by his success he sent a telegram to Andreyev in the Urals: "Pushing steadily eastward due to kindness of railway administration." He felt that a little bit of flattery now would do no harm. When his telegram reached the plant, there was great rejoicing. So dear old Kuzma Grigoryevich was alive and well, and as long as he was alive that meant the blueprints were safe and sound. Andreyev sent a man out to hunt for Kuzma Grigoryevich, and bring him money, food and felt boots. But the car with the thirty-five thousand blueprints was stranded again.

At the station of Arys, car No. 55 was uncoupled and Kuzma Grigoryevich was once again urged to make his way alone to the Urals and leave his freight to be shipped on later. But he could not agree to that. He would go with the blueprints, or not at all! He sold his jacket to buy food, for neither he nor Yosia had any money left by now. True, now and again the soldiers of loading crews would come to their assistance with a bowl of cabbage soup and a plate of rice. He would shamefacedly refuse at first, then thank them and eat with pleasure. He did not lose hope that the car would be hitched onto a train some time. In the evenings he would tell the soldiers stories about his plant and his home town. What a wonderful plant it was! "And there is its whole history," he would say pointing to the car with the blueprints. It was these fighting men and the political instructor of the crew who finally persuaded the engine driver of a passing train to attach the Stalino plant car.

The old man was triumphant. Now at last they were on their way again. He warmly thanked the soldiers and invited them cordially to come and visit the plant if ever they happened to be in the Donbas. For a long time the men gazed in the wake of the car that was bearing away the wonderful old man who would not give up.

One night in the midst of a snowstorm the train stopped at a small wayside station in the middle of the plains some distance from the town of Aralsk, and Kuzma Grigoryevich's car was uncoupled again and shunted onto a siding. This was almost the last straw even for Kuzma Grigoryevich. The bitter cold and the tiny station roof in the wilderness. But when Yosia timidly suggested hopping a passing passenger train and checking the freight at the station, Kuzma Grigoryevich turned on him in anger. Still, his heart was heavy. The cold penetrated the cracks in the car and the old man sat motionless for long hours on the top of the filing cabinets, with his coat wrapped tightly around him and his legs curled under him.

This was the first long journey he had ever taken. For he had spent more than forty years at the plant. He could still remember one of the Hughes—Arthur Jr. He used to see the plant through the windows of the designing office. In moments of leisure or reflection he loved to study the factory scene. Almost imperceptibly that scene changed from year to year. Some blast furnaces wore out and new and bigger ones took their place. And all of them—the old and the new, those that had worn out and those newly-built—went through his hands. He had prepared the blueprints for them all and they lived in his memory in all the complex details of design.

And now whenever Kuzma Grigoryevich would be seized by an overwhelming sense of the hopelessness of his position, stranded there on a siding in the midst of nowhere, he would busy himself rearranging the blueprints, going carefully over the drawings and tracing papers, pausing now and then to reread some old familiar design. As he read and reread these blueprints that were worn out at the folds, he felt the satisfaction a musician feels as he reads a score and loses himself for a while in the world of sound. And invariably he felt better afterwards. This was a tremendous legacy that had been entrusted to his care, he told himself. These blueprints represented the creative effort of thousands upon thousands of working men. Each design seemed to throb with the living idea of the author. The whole life history of the plant could be read in these blueprints—the rapacious exploitation of the Hughes, the first steps taken by the Soviet power and the bold sweep of the five-year plans.

Yes, one might think that at such a crucial moment when the fate of the country was being decided it was foolish to make such a fuss about some factory papers. But it was Kuzma Grigoryevich's firm conviction that only narrow-minded businessmen who did not want to see beyond their noses could think like that. Today these thirty-five thousand blueprints of his might be mere dead weight, insofar as they could

not give anything tangible to the front. But one had to look ahead. Tomorrow or the next day when victory had been won, these blueprints would be essential. How could you revive the Donbas, how could you restore the plant without the valuable technical experience that was embodied in these blueprints? He believed that he would live to see the day when the Germans would be driven out of the Donbas. "And when we return to Stalino," he thought, "when we return to our plant, and get it back on its feet again they will all rush to me, to Kuzma Grigoryevich Mogilevsky—the director, the department chiefs, all of them—and I will have the blueprints with all the measurements ready for them!"

Cold and hunger stalked the abandoned car. Occasionally Yosia would bring in some gruel frozen into a lump that he had begged of the soldiers of a passing troop train. Then he would go off to look for coal. Filching, he called it. But the old man shrank from the bald word. When Yosia would come back with a pailful of coal the car would be warm and cosy for a while. He would bring the latest news: one train had passed in the direction of the rear and two trains in the direction of the front loaded with tanks covered with tarpaulin. Winter caps were in vogue now, you could get three bowls of cereal or a pail of salt for one. . . .

The reflection of the fire from the iron stove would glow on their faces and the warmth and the food would put Kuzma Grigoryevich in a philosophical mood. "See what fine people there are in the world, Yosia," he would say. "There I was only a moment ago shivering with the cold and thinking, I confess, all sorts of gloomy thoughts about being forgotten by everyone, and having to give up the job entrusted to us. That is because neither you nor I, my dear fellow, have the right fighting spirit."

Every evening the old man would go to the railway administration and beg to be coupled to a train. Yosia, being the younger and more nimble of the two, would jump down from the high step of the car first and catch the spare old body of Kuzma Grigoryevich in his arms. The station was a primitive affair. Once a day the telegraph operator who lived in the neighbouring village would take up his position at the apparatus, tap out the necessary messages, wait for the answers and then go off home until the next evening. Realizing that it was useless to try to get anything done here, Kuzma Grigoryevich decided to send a wire to a higher authority. It took him a long time to compose the message, to find the words that would move the railway administration. He was rather proud of the final draft: it had just the right touch of exasperation tempered with dignity. But the telegraph operator seemed unimpressed. He tapped out the message with his usual indifference. "Appeal to your Bolshevik conscience," Kuzma Grigoryevich wrote. The wire was addressed to the Administration of the Railways with a copy to the Chkalov Regional Committee of the Party. In the middle of the night twenty-four hours later Kuzma Grigoryevich and Yosia were awakened by voices outside the car and the tapping of hammers on the wheels. Then a yard engine shunted it onto the main line where it was coupled to a passing train which had been stopped by orders from high authorities. Yosia was astounded by this turn of fortune, and looked at Kuzma Grigoryevich with reverential awe. To him it was nothing short of miraculous to have gotten action, and what action! But Kuzma Grigoryevich took it all for granted. He had not expected people to whose conscience he had appealed to act otherwise. In his joy, Yosia exchanged a pair of underwear for a loaf of black bread, dried fish and salt and they celebrated.

Now they were on their way to the Urals at last. They were not making any speed, to be sure, but no one tried to uncouple the car. The frost grew more severe. The old man accustomed to the southern climate suffered intensely from the cold. One day he awoke feeling chilled to the bone. The morning light streamed through the cracks in the car. He heard voices outside and saw Yosia struggling to open the sliding doors that were jammed by ice and snow. Climbing down painfully from his berth, each movement at the cost of pain, he joined Yosia, and put his bony old shoulder to the jamb to help pry the door open. Only now did Kuzma Grigoryevich realize how old and helpless he was. He threw off his mittens and grasped the icy door handle and pulled with all his feeble strength.

The sun streamed through the opening, blinding him. His head spinning, he tried to make out the name of the station. "Nadezh-dinsk," he read slowly. And he did not realize at first that this was the promised Urals land, his goal and destination, the end of a fifty-nine-day Odyssey. He and his thirty-five thousand blueprints had arrived!

IV

Fifteen hundred Stalino iron and steel plant workers with Andreyev, at their head, worked at the Urals factory turning out steel for tanks and aircraft. Engineer Tsarytsyn was at a factory in Alapaevsk not far away and sometimes he and Andreyev would phone through to each other and ask the question that was uppermost in the minds of all the "exiles" in those days: "When?" The factory took all of Andreyev's time but now and again a nostalgia yearning to be back in the Donbas took possession of him. At such times he would go to Kuzma Grigoryevich in the designing office. The sight of the old man who reminded him of Stalino and his beloved plant cheered him. Kuzma Grigoryevich was hard at work putting his thirty-five thousand blueprints in order. He, too, was constantly asking the question that was forever on the lips of all the Donbas workers: When?

On the night of September 7, 1943, during a production conference, a long-distance call from Sverdlovsk came through to Andreyev. He listened with mounting excite-

ment as the assistant people's commissar of the iron and steel industry at the other end of the wire read him the government order for the resumption of operations at the Stalino plant and the immediate organization of restoration work. Andreyev was appointed director of the plant and ordered to leave at once for the Donbas to carry the decision into effect.

"Has Stalino been retaken?" Andreyev inquired.

"There is fighting on the approaches to Stalino," was the reply.

Andreyev gave the names of the engineers he wanted to come with him and obtained permission on the spot. Then he put down the receiver and got busy. He sent a telegram to engineer Telesov who worked at the Krasny Oktyabr plant in Stalingrad, instructing him to leave at once by plane for the Donbas. He telephoned to Tsarytsyn in Alapaevsk and told him to be in Sverdlovsk the following morning. He phoned to his engineers Starovoitov, Staroverov, Glaskov, Kulbagov, Kameristov and Tereshin to be at the railway station in the morning. He listened patiently to their excited outbursts, but would finally interrupt the ecstatic outpourings with a businesslike reminder:

"Take only the most essential things with you—technical data on the work of the department, adequate footwear, bread. . . ."

In the midst of all the excitement Kuzma Grigoryevich called up. The old man had somehow learned that Andreyev was about to leave and he was afraid he had been forgotten.

"Pavel Vassilievich," he said brokenly, "My dear Pavel Vassilievich, how could you. . . ."

"Don't worry, I haven't forgotten you," Andreyev assured him.

But the old man would not be quieted. He felt sure that something would go wrong and he would be left behind in the Urals. But as soon as Andreyev asked him how matters stood with the blueprints, Kuzma Grigoryevich forgot his worries and replied smartly:

"I am prepared at any moment to move with all the blueprints from the times of old Hughes up to October 14, 1941. . . ."

At three o'clock in the morning Andreyev lay down for a nap. But sleep was out of the question. The telephone rang almost at once. It was Starovoitov. He begged a thousand pardons but would Andreyev kindly tell him whether everything still stood? When Andreyev had reassured him that such was the case he thanked him, wished him a good night and rang off. Fifteen minutes later Staroverov called up. He offered no apologies.

"Pavel Vassilievich," he asked disarmingly. "Were you asleep? I can't sleep. Can't believe I'm not dreaming. For the love of God tell me I am not."

"No, you aren't," said Andreyev.

He had just put down the receiver when a call came through from Sverdlovsk.

"Haven't you left yet? Tevosyan wants you to start at once."

His wife was busy preparing him for the journey. He flatly refused to take any luggage with him, insisting on travelling lightly with nothing more than an extra pair of boots, a leather jacket and an overcoat. And, of course, his notebooks, his beloved notebooks. He rejected the two suits of clothes, the topboots and several other articles of clothing his wife packed for him. What did he need all this for? He was going home, wasn't he?

"But you don't know what you will find when you get home?" his wife said quietly.

No, he didn't know. He hadn't thought of that for some reason. He realized now that he could not be sure whether home, plant, or even the town were still there. But that didn't matter. Whatever happened, whatever the extent of the destruction, the important thing was that the Donbas was ours again.

He held open the travelling bag and his wife carefully deposited the pile of old notebooks, adding underwear, several cans of food and a few loaves of bread. When all was ready he could not go back to sleep. Instead he paced up and down the room, tense with excitement and anticipation.

Early the next morning he and his comrades boarded the train. The news that Andreyev was leaving for the Donbas had got around and the station platform was crowded with Donbas people. Blast furnace men, steelmakers, engineers pressed his hand and begged him to give their regards to the Donbas. He and his fellow travellers were particularly touched by the bouquets of field flowers given them by those who saw them off.

In Sverdlovsk Andreyev was not even given time to go up to the offices of the chief administration. He called the assistant people's commissar from downstairs:

"What! You're still here?" was the latter's greeting. "Go straight to the airdrome. The plane's waiting. Tevosyan wants no delay!"

Their plane landed in Moscow that same evening. Andreyev went straight to the People's Commissariat, only to find that Tevosyan had already left for the Donbas. Andreyev and his companions spent the night in a bomb shelter. They slept on the floor with their overcoats for mattresses and their bags for pillows. At dawn they took off for the Donbas. The plane landed in Starobelsk: the Stalino airdrome had not yet been demined. Planes were landing every few minutes in Starobelsk and Voroshilovgrad that day. They were coming in from all directions, bringing Donbas Party workers, plant managers, chiefs of coal trusts, engineers. . . .

The train—or rather a long string of locomotives—left Starobelsk for Enakievo after midnight. Andreyev and his companions travelled "de luxe" on top of a heap of coal in the tender. Rolling along under familiar southern skies, Andreyev looked back at the locomotives and saw that there were passengers in all the engines and tenders. These were engineers, Party functionaries, builders and teachers returning to the Donbas.

From Enakievo they travelled by truck

to Stalino. They stood up all the way, clinging to one another for support and staring silently at the panorama that spread before them. Overturned guns in ditches, smashed carts, fire-gutted tanks, smoke-blackened earth, charred bushes—they were seeing all this for the first time. Just outside Stalino, Andreyev sighted an open jeep with Tevosyan riding in the back. He jumped off the truck and ran over to the car.

"I've just been there," Tevosyan said in answer to the old friend's unspoken question.

"Well?" Andreyev demanded urgently. "How is it? Badly damaged?"

"Bad enough," said Tevosyan. But he did not expand on the subject. He evidently did not want to grieve Andreyev. "Bad enough," he repeated, then added gently: "Go and see for yourself. Take a good look and give it thought. . . ."

On that they parted, Tevosyan bound for Makeyevka, Andreyev, for Stalino. It was only eight days since the town had been recaptured. They drove down Artyomov Street where some buildings were still smoking. Then they drove on to their own street—and thence to the plant. In their joy and excitement at being home again they did not perceive at first the full extent of the frightful devastation.

The factory grounds were overgrown with tall weeds. They grew not only in the yard but at the foot of the blown-up columns, beside the wrecked open-hearth furnaces, on the railway tracks; weeds entangled the rusty pillars that lay like stricken things. The rusty iron made a scraping, jarring noise. And this scraping sound, the luxuriant weeds, the smell of burnt iron, the dust that lay on everything, combined to produce a frightening sense of death—the death of an industrial giant. The plant Andreyev, Telesov, Kuzma Grigoryevich, Tsarytsyn, Yektov, Starovoitov knew so well, the splendid plant, old in years but young in spirit, that plant was no more. Workshops, machinery, furnaces, all had been reduced to a mass of shapeless metal. It was as though a giant lay there at their feet, crushed and mutilated. They spoke in whispers as if fearing to break the awesome stillness. And as they walked slowly on, bitterness and resentment filled their souls.

Birds had built their nests in what has remained of the furnaces. As the men approached they flew up into the air, the whirring of their wings the only sign of life in this wilderness of wreckage. The wind played with the rusty pieces of sheet iron; the blast furnaces, once mighty, now wrecked and disfigured, half covered with sand and mould, were a pitiful sight to behold.

Tsarytsyn remained in the blast furnace department; Yektov, in the rolling mill, Telesov, in the open-hearth section. . . .

Andreyev, of course, did not yet have a definite plan of action. But although this initial tour of inspection was necessarily cursory and deeply depressing, he was already making mental notes of all that might be done to bring the plant to life. On the way back he met Tsarytsyn.

"Do you know what, Pavel Vassilievich," said the latter. "The brickwork of furnace No. 3 is intact."

That was the first and surest sign of life. Later on Andreyev saw Yektov who told him that one of the rolling mills, though damaged, was not entirely hopeless. Then he bumped into Kuzma Grigoryevich. The old man was accompanied by several other ancients. He had visited the open-hearth department and said that in his opinion one of the first things to be done was to raise the supports in group A. He suggested sending a telegram to the Urals at once asking that the blueprints of the supports be sent by plane. And in the meantime he and his old men would get started on the drafts. How many times later on did Andreyev, the department chiefs and building workers have occasion to bless Kuzma Grigoryevich for having taken such good care of the plant's blueprints. In the battle for steel which the plant launched on September 15th, 1943, those thirty-five thousand blueprints gained for the plant the most important factor—time!

After his tour of inspection Andreyev went for a walk down what had been one of his favourite streets in the factory settlement, because of the delicious scent of the flowers that grew there. Flower Street—it was called and even under the Germans its name had been Blümenstrasse. But there were no longer any flowers, and many of the houses had been burned down.

The people he met that day looked prematurely aged. It was as if not only the plant, with its blast furnaces and rolling mills, but everything in the settlement, including the people, had worn to a shadow.

That evening Andreyev held a meeting of the workers. The club which had survived by some miracle could not hold all those who wanted to see and hear their comrades who have returned from the Urals. And so the doors were left wide open and a huge crowd stood outside eagerly catching every word that issued from the dark interior of the club. For naturally, there was no electricity. One kerosene lamp afforded the sole illumination. Danila Arkhipovich, an old blast-furnace man, held it up to light up Andreyev's face.

"I have been over the plant," Andreyev began. "I have seen all the destruction." He paused. Everyone waited tensely for him to continue. They knew only too well what the plant had been and what it had become. The silence in the hall was such that Andreyev could hear the people breathe.

"Nevertheless," he said peering into the darkness at the faces before him, "nevertheless," he repeated forcefully, "the plant shall live! It must live! We Bolsheviks will revive it!"

An audible sigh of relief rose from the hundreds seated in the hall and those standing outside. The plant will live. . . These people who had endured the horrors of life under the Germans, these people, old and young, men and women, who had been born and brought up in this settlement, who had made steel and poured metal—for them the plant was everything. The lamp in the hands of the old blast-furnace man trembled.

"Higher!" someone shouted. And some young hands reached out toward the lamp, took it from the old man and raised it higher. For the people wanted to see the face of the man who uttered these words: the plant will live! Life—good, radiant, Soviet life—had returned to them along with Andreyev, with Kuzma Grigoryevich, with Tsarytsyn, with Telesov, with Starovoitov, with Staroverov and Yektov, with all these comrades they had known so well before the war.

"How did you fare here, comrades?" Andreyev asked.

But a young, passionate voice cried out of the depths of the hall:

"Tell us about yourselves, dear comrades!"

It was a cry that came straight from the heart. The people who had lived under the Germans, who had gone through the terrible years of occupation, were hungry for things Soviet. They wanted to hear how Soviet people lived over there in the Urals. And Andreyev told them all he knew about the Urals, with its hundreds of evacuated plants from the Ukraine, including the Donbas, about all these plants that had migrated to the East; he told them how they had been set up on Ural and Siberian soil and how people, labouring under incredible difficulties, had assembled the equipment and had begun producing steel for the front. He told them about the people who, undaunted by the hardships of wartime, had given their all for victory.

They listened to him with rapt attention. The very sound of his voice was music to the ears of these people who had been cut off for so many long months from all that was dear to them. There he was, Pavel Vassilievich, their chief engineer in his old familiar leather jacket, as calm and unruffled as always, his appearance unchanged except for his hair which was greyer.

The first group of Party workers, the first engineers and executives, the first Bolsheviks, whether Party members or not, who returned to the plant were a mere handful. Yet every man who returned from the Urals to the Donbas brought back with him some miraculous hidden store of moral strength, that untouchable last reserve every man harbours for an emergency. One had to possess tremendous moral courage not to lose heart at the sight of such frightful destruction: one had to possess a profound faith in the ability of Soviet people to cope with this herculean task. This deep conviction that it was essential now, without waiting for the war to end, to tackle this tremendous task, was common to them all.

And though the war against German fascism was not yet over, the country lent its mighty shoulder to the creative efforts of the people who had undertaken to restore the Donbas. Huge funds were allotted from the war reserves for this purpose. But there was another fund to draw on, and the Communist Party knew it. The enthusiasm of the population at large, their willingness, nay, eagerness, to put their shoulders to the wheel was something our engineers and Party workers, with all their knowledge and experience, could not have done without. It was this factor that Andreyev relied upon when he drew up his plans of restoration.

They had to begin with small things. Water and light were prime necessities. The first fifty kilowatts of electric energy were obtained by a complicated method. They found a steam engine that had been used to run the hoist mechanism of a blast furnace. Then a lathe was put together by hand, and turned by hand to machine a transmission gear connecting the steam engine with an electric motor. The result was a fifty-kilowatt power unit, which they used to light up the machine shop. Then, with the same few kilowatts, they launched a half-ton cupola and again, with the same few kilowatts they got the flour mill running. For the people had to be fed. . . And that is how it went on at each stage. With a similar minimum of electric power similarly obtained they started things going in Makeyevka, Gorlovka, and Mariupol. The Zugres—the Zuev state power station—which had generated great quantities of energy before the war, had been put out of commission by the Germans. It too began its recovery with the same pitiful amount of power.

But the main task at the initial stage of revival was the restoration of the open-hearth furnace No. 4, a rolling mill and one blast furnace. That was the spearhead of the offensive in the battle for steel.

V

Dispatcher Popova arrived at the Stalino plant when the war was still going on. She had come to the Donbas of her own free will and to get a transfer from the Urals plant at which she had worked, required a great deal of determination and persistence. When she argued that she was not looking for a soft job, that the work would be hard where she was going, it was pointed out to her, not unreasonably, that since this was wartime there was plenty of hard work everywhere.

"Yes, but the work to be done in the Donbas is harder than in many other places," she said.

And since she was right—for the Donbas was devastated and had to be built up again—and inasmuch as she continued to insist, she was finally allowed to go. In the Urals technical school and the plant she was known not only as a dispatcher, but as a poet as well, and a gifted one at that.

When Andreyev, the Stalino plant director, learned that Popova wrote verses, he said encouragingly:

"We need poets as well as dispatchers."

And he meant it. He did not doubt that poetry helps to make steel.

She had begun writing verses from her schooldays. Some of her verses had been published in the factory newspaper, most of them were lyrics. A slender, light-haired girl, earnest and grave as the majority of people who hail from the Urals, Popova believed that at 19 one must do something big, to leave something to hand down to

posterity. Her first name had a rather romantic flavour: Interna—inspired by the word International. As for her family name, nothing could be more common for a Russian girl than Popova. She felt that new surroundings, a new landscape, a new life and new hardships to grapple with would do a lot for her as a poet. And indeed there was no lack of work or difficulties. Quite the reverse, in fact. There was something bleak about those dark grey slag heaps that surrounded the plant, their tips seeming to pierce the clear Donbas sky. But all these first impressions soon receded and work absorbed her whole attention—hard work with very little romance about it.

It was her job that was to blame for everything. As a dispatcher you never saw anything, only heard. And you heard the same words over and over again—ore, coal, coke, air. So far all she could see from the window of the dispatcher's office was scaffolding. And each day was a repetition of the previous day—ore, ladles, coke, dolomites, cement... The dispatcher's office had one table and one telephone. One telephone for the whole department. At the Urals plant the dispatcher's office had been outfitted with the latest equipment. But here the office was still in the process of formation, as indeed was the whole plant. At first there was not even electricity. All there was of it was hardly enough to serve the most vital parts of the plant.

Was this the life she had envisioned when she had insisted on going to the Donbas, she sometimes asked herself. She was too young to take part in the first five-year plans. She had only read about them or heard her elders tell of the Young Communists mobilized for the great construction jcbs, of the tents in the steppes, the plans, the dreams and the struggle... During the war she had managed to achieve something, but very little, in her own opinion. It was the opportunity to become an active participant in a great construction undertaking that had drawn her to the Donbas.

She had pictured the struggle for restoration in a somewhat more glamourous light. She had expected breath-taking feats of heroism. But she did not see that heroism either in herself or in others. Everything was much simpler. Scrubbing the rust off the columns, beams and girders with wire brushes might be a backbreaking job but hardly glamourous.

Nor did she attach much importance to her own work. It was a matter of acquiring a certain telegraphic style of speech, of being alert and wide awake. The life of the plant reached her through the different voices that sounded in her ear; some complaining, some imploring, some gay and triumphant... By the tone of the voice she could judge how things were progressing in one or another department of the plant. Sometimes she tried to imagine what the man from the blast furnace who had such a soft, mellow voice looked like. She pictured him as tubby and good-natured. The technician from the gas department whose voice had an angry, jarring sound must be the skinny, nervous type. Without having seen any of the people with whom she was dealing in the course of her work she learned to recognize them by their voices. She herself spoke rapidly and briefly, and exclusively of the question on hand—transport, raw material supplies, coking gas or the fulfillment of the day's plan. As a matter of fact, there was simply no time for anything else. After all, there was only one telephone at first, and any attempt to use it for personal conversation was immediately nipped in the bud.

"Cut it short! Cut it short!"

Her own questions were brief and to the point: Coal? Ore? Dolomites? Steam? Ladles? Her well-trained memory quickly grasped a situation: she knew how much ore, how much coal, coke, ladles the plant had at a given moment, where extra ladles were to be found when the open-hearth department needed them, how the available supply of gas was to be distributed... There was really very little time left for poetry. By the time she came home she would be exhausted. If it were not for her mother who forced her to sit down and eat, she would not have worried about food at all. Sleep, sleep was all she craved for. Sometimes, while sitting at the table, drowsy and aching with weariness, she would stretch out her slender, still half-childish arms, lay her head on them and be asleep in a moment. Sometimes she would start in her sleep and cry out in her stern, dispatcher's voice: "Why didn't you think of it before?"

But for real poetry, for poetry that filled the soul and lent the touch of magic to everything the poet came into contact with, for poetry as the junior dispatcher saw it, there was no place in her life. Everything was swallowed up by such prosaic things as coal, coke, blast furnaces, lime, dolomite and ore, ore... What could she see through the windows of the dispatcher's office? A fragment of a factory building, hidden behind scaffolding, and that was all. And so she actually began to forget about poetry, which, after all, was the thing that brought her to the Donbas. The verses she had written in the Urals struck her now as feeble, childish efforts. All too much about love and romance....

Life here was a grim business for everybody. For her, too. She saw how much effort it took to obtain building materials, saw Andreyev's face darken when she brought him the report of the day's work. She was already accustomed to the way he would clutch at his graying head when he read the report, then would sink deep in thought, and finally pick up a pencil and begin figuring feverishly. She always felt sorry for him and would timidly endeavour to console him by telling him how she had overcome some snag with ladle shortage.

Andreyev would listen attentively to her and nod his head in approval.

One day, as she was about to leave the room, he stopped her with the question:

"And what about your poetry? Are you writing anything?"

She waved her hand in a hopeless gesture. Poetry! How could anyone talk about poetry in the midst of all this prose.

"Prose?" repeated Andreyev, "Prose did you say? Now, listen to me, I am not a poet. I'm a plain engineer. A metallurgical engineer, to be exact. But it seems to me that if you look closer you will find poetry right here in front of your nose. In every factory building, in fact. In the open-hearth furnace No. 4 and in the blast furnace... You only have to see things." He rose and walked over to the window and threw it open.

"Look," he said, "It's growing from day to day before our eyes. Not as fast perhaps as one might wish. But it is growing."

When she left he sat down again at his desk, smiling as he thought of the little dispatcher. Not that this slender little redhead from the Urals with the grave, earnest face had done anything miraculous. She had merely used her intelligence and initiative in the matter of ladles. Nevertheless, as a director, he was gratified. The most terrible thing, he felt, was the indifference, incompetence, lack of imagination and unwillingness to shoulder even the slightest share of the general responsibility that he found in some employees. Why was it that with some workers you had only to give a general outline of the job in hand for them to fill in the gaps themselves and find ways and means of fulfilling the task, while others practically had to be led by the hand....

Popova left the director's office with a rather guilty feeling as though she had let him down in some inexplicable way. But, after all, it was not easy to write poetry. There was a time when she had thought that she would indeed find her muse at this Donbas plant. But, as Pushkin had said, one does not seek inspiration, it comes of itself. And just when the junior dispatcher had begun to forget that she had ever written verse, when she had stopped thinking that she had come to the Donbas in search of inspiration and heroism, somewhere in the innermost depths of her soul there stirred that familiar and all-but-forgotten poetic emotion.

Curiously enough it was a funny incident that started her off. It began prosaically enough. She was standing in a queue at the factory store, listening to the animated voices of the engineers and technicians awaiting their turn, and comparing the lively loquacity of these southerners with the rather grim reserve of her compatriots in the Urals. She did not know any of the people here but some of the voices sounded familiar. That soft, rather melodious voice in front of her must belong to Chupilo, the shift foreman. Finally she mustered the courage to ask him.

"None other," he replied gaily. "And whom have I the honour of addressing?"

She introduced herself.

"Oh, so you're the young woman I'm always fighting with over the phone," said Chupilo interested. "That's a formidable voice you've got."

"And who is that man with the squeaky voice? Is it the technician from the gas department?" she asked.

"Right again! He's a go-getter, that one!"

There was one more voice that excited her curiosity, a stern, slightly mocking voice. She guessed it belonged to Tsarytsyn. Once again Chupilo confirmed her surmise.

"Yes, that is Alexander Nikolayevich Tsarytsyn."

These engineers and technicians standing there with their shopping bags waiting for their potato ration seemed suddenly to acquire new personalities. Listening to their conversation she discovered that even here, even in the store they talked about plant business. Indeed a casual observer might have mistaken the occasion for a production conference.

"Don't try to tell me the sub-contractor is to blame," Tsarytsyn was saying sternly to a building engineer with a meek face, "I've heard that story before. You'll have to answer just the same."

As the man with the meek face mumbled something in self defence, the little dispatcher suddenly felt a thrill of excitement surge through her veins, an eagerness to know more about these people who were reviving the war-ravaged town, these irrepressibles, as Chupilo called them. And everything which until this moment seemed so dull and commonplace now acquired a new meaning to her. Without making any effort, without even trying to marshal her impressions, she felt words, lines and rhythms take shape somewhere deep down in her soul.

One day, soon after this incident, while on a trip to the town to send a wire on the latest plant report, she met some acquaintances of hers who were working as dispatchers at other enterprises. They, too, had come to the telegraph office with reports on the output of metal, coal, and chemicals in the reviving Donbas, to be wired to Moscow. By morning these reports would be in Moscow; they would be taken to the Kremlin, no doubt, and laid on the table alongside the communiqué from the battlefront.

When she had handed in her telegram she went back to the plant. She was on night duty that evening. At dawn, as she sat by the window listening to the sounds of the new day, inspiration came to the little dispatcher. It was as though a dam had burst, flooding her soul with pent-up ideas and emotions that demanded expression. Attached to the copy of the production report which she laid on the director's table that morning was a sheet of foolscap paper covered with round, girlish handwriting:

Before his easel sat a youthful artist—
Here flowed a fountain; in fall the fount is
still.
Beyond the border stretched the ruined city,
A Donbas city, with a factory on a hill.
He complained to some old man of lodgings,
Of how cheerless, dark, unheated, was his
room.
And all the while the painter's hand was
tracing
The houses that beyond the factory loomed.
He painted ruined streets and empty windows,
Weeds, abandoned quarries, tumbled bricks;
Against this chaos, suddenly tall columns,
A sense of beauty and of order fixed.
Like honeycombs, the scaffolding on buildings,

Rose higher than the towers of the mines,
Up climbed a bucket filled with whitewash,
The ropes drawn taut in intersecting lines.
The artist chose to paint war's desolation,
But something which he did not understand,
Made his picture breathe of restoration,
Of life and labour, of reviving land.
Perhaps because my artist was so youthful,
(And judging by his scars, had seen the war)
He could not wait to see his city lovely,
To see again the beauty known before.

VI

When Nadezhda Nikolayevna phoned the plant and asked for the director, the secretary told her that he had left an hour ago, immediately after a conference. She phoned the garage and learned that Andreyev had taken out the car and driven off. "Alone?" she asked. The answer was "Yes, he was at the wheel himself." After this she stopped phoning. He would most likely return soon, for these drives of his into the steppe usually lasted about two or three hours.

She knew that whenever Andreyev had a racking headache or was worried about something he would climb into his car—an affair assembled from parts of various cars—roll down the side windows and speed off far into the steppe. Wind and motion always had a soothing effect on him. He would stop somewhere in the middle of the steppe, attune his ear to the stillness of the night and soon regain his mental equilibrium.

Nadezhda Nikolayevna was Andreyev's wife. They lived just a few minutes' walk from the works, and the entire fabric of her life was closely intertwined with the life of the plant. When the furnaces did not function properly it affected her too. Her husband did not always have to tell her in so many words about the state of affairs at the mill: she could fathom it all from his eyes, from the expression on his face, even from his silence. When the telephone rang at night—as it very often did—she sometimes took up the receiver herself so as to give Andreyev an extra minute's sleep. "Hello!" she would whisper into the mouthpiece.

"The power's been cut off," a desperate voice would announce.

She always hesitated about waking her husband. Yet she always did. It was better that way. Nadezhda Nikolayevna had interests and work of her own—she directed the settlement's children's theater which she herself founded. But this work was an integral part of her husband's job of producing metal.

When Andreyev drove up to the house he saw that the dining room lights were on. Nadezhda Nikolayevna was waiting for him and had supper ready on the table. She had laid out the telegrams and telephone messages that had come in his absence and was reading a book. He bent over her to see the title *Anticipations*, a novel by Wells.

"What's it about?" he asked automatically.

Nadezhda Nikolayevna pondered for a moment. "It's about people who live in anticipation," she said.

When he asked her what she meant by that, she explained:

"It's about people who spent their lifetime in anticipation of the real life."

Andreyev read aloud a phrase which had caught his eye: "Commiseration never made a good doctor." He smiled and said: "As director of a plant I could add something to that: 'Over-enthusiasm or over-caution never made a good engineer.'"

As he chatted with Nadezhda Nikolayevna he seemed to be recasting aloud the events of the day that had just passed. What was on his mind? Nothing but a trifle—or rather, what seemed to be a trifle. He had instructed one of his assistants to lay out a little garden at the plant, like the one they had before the war. But what had his assistant done? He had laid out the grounds and put up a band stand but had forgoten about one simple detail—benches. And when he, Andreyev, had taken a walk through the garden that day, an old worker came up to him and said with a smile, "Everything's done well, Pavel Vassilievich, but there's nowhere to sit."

"Just think of it! Here's a good thing spoiled by a man who hasn't got his heart in the job. Why did that fellow leave out the benches? Simply because he himself has no desire to stroll in that garden, because he doesn't take the slightest interest in what he's doing. Like those people Wells writes about, he lives in anticipation, which is only semi-life. That is a philosophy of makeshift. A man of this sort reasons like this: 'Now I'll throw it together any old way, and later, when conditions are normal, I'll return to it.' I'm against stopgaps! If we're going to rebuild, then let's do it so that we don't have to come back to it again. Let's build on a foundation that is sound, lasting. And let's do it faster and better than before the war. Let's take conditions into account and overcome them. Now we're laying the foundation for the rehabilitation of the plant. We must visualize the plant not only as it was but as it should be. Some day I'll get angry and have our gardener report at a conference. Let them all listen to a man who loves his work. You know, Nadya, we're getting ahead with the flowers, our nursery is beginning to develop. Of course, no one has flowers on his mind now. What we all need is iron and steel. But all the same, we have to think of flowers even now. And we're growing a large variety in our nursery: pansies, chrysanthemums, gillyflowers, violets and that common little flower called 'girl-in-green.'"

"What about furnace No. 2?" Nadezhda Nikolayevna asked warily. She sensed that he had not told her the main thing that was on his mind.

"We've decided to operate it with the old air-blower."

He never hesitated to speak to her about these matters. She was not only a good listener—she understood him. She did not know all the details of the risk involved in operating the blast furnace with the old Allis air-blower, but she did know that this was the thing that was troubling him now more than anything else.

"I can't wait," he said in a quiet, but ex-

cited voice. "You understand? I can't wait until we get an air-blower with a larger capacity. We want to turn out metal for the front without delay. I want it and so do the others."

At Gorlovka, Makeyevka and Stalino the first stages of rehabilitation followed a different course in each case. At each place the men surmounted the difficulties in their own way. But common to the history of every plant and every colliery was a creative apex, so to speak, the high point of tension that so clearly reflects the vitality inherent in the Donbas. At the Stalino plant this creative apex was the blowing-in of blast furnace No.2. The rehabilitation plan called for the launching of capacities at the plant in such a way as to achieve a complete cycle. Open-hearth furnace No. 4 was put into commission on February 14. Rolling Mill No. 400 was started on March 15. And the blast furnace was to be blown in on March 30. That would make a complete cycle from pig iron to the rolled metal.

Successful launching of the blast furnace depended upon many factors. The main factor, however, was the air-blower. According to all standards, the furnace required a more powerful machine than the one available at the plant. But it was a matter of either waiting until a new one was delivered or of employing the Allis machine and thus putting the plant into operation, and producing metal right there and then. The Allis air-blower had a history. It had given good, honest service ever since Academician Pavlov had bought it in America more than forty years ago for the Sulin mill. By the standards of those days it was a highly efficient machine. The mill owners had even reproached Pavlov for buying a machine that was too expensive. It had gone out of active service at the Stalino plant before the war and had been used only on rare occasions as an addition to the main air-blowers.

The war years had been merciful to the Allis air-blower. When Andreyev returned from the Urals they came across it among the wreckage of the air-blower station. The machine had such a reserve of durability in her that they were able to patch her up. Now, thanks to this air-blower the blast furnace could be started without much delay. Besides, the situation as regards power had improved considerably. Nevertheless, blowing in the furnace involved risk. It was not enough simply to decide to use the old Allis air-blower. Exact calculations had to be made. The question was: would the furnace be able to function with the limited amount of air furnished by the old air-blower, or would it choke? No matter how one approached the problem, the risk remained. Launching the furnace with that low-capacity air-blower and with no machine in reserve in the event of a breakdown was like skating on thin ice.

Having weighed all the pros and cons, a conference called by Andreyev decided to put the furnace into operation, using the Allis air-blower. Tsarytsyn firmly backed the idea. If it had been any other engineer but Tsarytsyn, chief of the blast furnace department, Andreyev might have hesitated to take the chance. Andreyev knew that Tsarytsyn had all the resourcefulness an engineer should have. He was a real blast furnace man, which was saying a great deal. Academician Pavlov had once said that nobody had ever looked into a blast furnace and nobody was able to see what was going on inside, but the engineer in charge had to know —so he could run it. Tsarytsyn knew how to run furnaces.

By blowing in the furnace, the plant would win the race against time—and time was a supreme factor in the fight for metal. The armed forces needed metal without delay. Apart from the purely technological aspects that prompted the decision, there were other aspects of a purely psychological nature. Andreyev held that the blowing in of the furnace could and would serve as a new source of inspiration to the workers. It would raise their spirits, would show them that the rehabilitation of the plant which the Bolsheviks had undertaken was a matter of the immediate present, a matter for the people now living, and not for the future.

Under normal conditions, most likely no one, including Andreyev, would ever have decided to launch the furnace with that air-blower. But when the country is at war and when the armed forces need every ton of metal they can get, one has to learn to overcome all obstacles. Nevertheless, after the decision had been taken and the furnace was ready to be started, Andreyev had his moments of doubt—what if the air-blower fell down on the job? Tevosyan phoned on March 29. He always phoned at the decisive moment.

"Made up your mind?" was his first question.

"Yes," replied Andreyev.

On March 30, blast furnace No. 2 was charged, and the old foreman Danila Arkhipovich fired it. He worked with solemn deliberation, as though performing a religious rite. He must have been just about the oldest man at the plant—he and Kuzma Grigoryevich. The chief of the designing bureau was also there at the furnace. The old foreman went about his work calmly. He placed a heap of shavings inside the furnace, poured kerosene over them and then applied a red-hot crowbar. The grey-haired old fellow stood by the furnace a while listening as the fire caught and began to roar.

A day later the furnace produced its first load of pig iron. Those first twenty-four hours were tense for Andreyev, Tsarytsyn, Kuzma Grigoryevich, the old foreman, the furnacemen, the gas men and the rest of the workers. One question was uppermost in the minds of all: how would the air-blower perform? It performed faultlessly. At twilight on the last day of March the old foreman knocked out the taphole with his crowbar, and the pig iron came rushing out.

Andreyev wanted to be alone, if only for a few minutes. They were now producing pig iron! First they had turned out steel and then rolled metal; now, with the blast furnace in operation, things would go in a different order: from pig iron to steel and rolled metal. He walked over to the eastern gate from where he had his first view of the plant five months before. Then a scene of rust-covered wreckage

had met his eyes. He turned his head slowly from right to left, taking in the mill. Yes, it looks quite different. Wrecked columns still jutted out in the open-hearth shop, but the furnace No. 4 was in operation there, and so was the rolling mill, and so was the blast furnace. This was the beginning, the beginning of the battle for steel. The plant was far from its pre-war level, but it was already a plant, with new strength maturing under the scaffolding. This was life. And where there is life there is happiness.

On the night of March 31, after the furnace had been blown in, Tevosyan, the People's Commissar of the Iron and Steel Industry, phoned from Moscow. "How do you feel?" he asked Andreyev.

"We've turned out the first smelt of pig iron," Andreyev said. Then, knowing what was worrying Tevosyan, he added: "I feel fine, and the air-blower is working splendidly."

On that night of March 31, 1944, when the bulletins from the fronts announced that our tanks—machines made of the best Soviet steel—had pushed over roads and across fields turned into a sea of mud by the spring thaw, and had come out onto operational terrain crushing German resistance and crossing the Pruth River; when our troops were continuing to drive the enemy back at Beltsy; when they captured Lyubashevka on the Odessa sector; when they crossed the Southern Bug at Nikolayev; when the entire front, from sea to sea, was pushing ahead stubbornly under the direction of one man—on that warm March night the dispatcher sent off a telegraphic report on the launching of the blast furnace and a report of the plant's output of pig iron, steel and rolled metal. And most likely that same night the two reports were placed on the desk of the man with whom our people associate their happiness and their life.

Perhaps, and even most likely, those tons of metal turned out by the oldest Donbas mill were immediately taken into account and made a tangible part of the general balance sheet of war; perhaps, and even most likely, that metal was added to the scale of the great battle our people and our Red Army were waging against Hitler Germany.

Early in April a telegram of congratulations from Stalin was received at the mill. Stalin congratulated the workers, engineers, technicians and office employees of the Stalino Iron and Steel Mill and the Stalino Coke and Chemical Works on the successful rehabilitation and launching of the first blast furnace and coking battery.

"By your selfless work in rehabilitating this veteran iron and steel mill you are demonstrating in action the unconquerable will of the Soviet people to revive rapidly the iron and steel industry of the Donbas."

The first telegram from Stalin to the people of the Donbas had been received in Enakievo when the first batch of metal was produced. The second was received at the Zuev power plant when the first turbine was commissioned. And now a new message from Stalin had been received at the old iron and steel mill. Like the others, it contained the warm, simple words:

"I wish you further successes in your work."

Under Wartime Conditions

Rehabilitation of Zugres (the Zuev State Power Station), which before the war had a tremendous capacity, was one of the first links in the general plan for the rehabilitation of the Donbas. The day I arrived at Zugres, a powerful new turbine was being put through a series of tests. The eyes of the entire Donbas were riveted to the place, for the 100,000-kw. turbogenerator would be a substantial addition to the region's power resources. In addition to the big power capacities put into operation while the war was still in progress, the 100,000 kw. then being born in the Zugres generator hall would create a new power reserve and open up vistas for new rapid progress in the Donbas.

The commissioning of this turbogenerator was the last act in a definite and highly notable stage in the history of Zugres. When I asked director Yudin to tell me about the initial period of reconstruction, he rummaged in the drawers of his desk for a long time and finally came up with a long, narrow sheet of coarse paper folded in two. "Here," he said, handing it to me, "it's all written down here."

I thought this would be a diary in which he had entered his ideas and observations. Instead, it turned out to be just a brief memorandum. The paper it was written on was rough and thick and had blue hairlines running through it. I did not get the chance to read the memorandum on the spot because Yudin was called to the generator hall.

The 100,000-kw. turbine was entering the decisive stage of the tests, and the tense atmosphere that always attends such occasions could be felt in the generator hall. Everybody was confident that the machine would make a good showing. Yet some of the men betrayed anxiety. It was particularly reflected in the faces of the engineers from the plant which had manufactured the turbine. They were the ones who had to answer for its performance. The senior assemblyman of the plant, and the chief engineer of Zugres, Ilya Borisovich Kopelyan, were catching the sounds of the turbine at work. I asked Kopelyan where the first turbine, a 50,000-kw. affair commissioned during the war, was located, and he pointed to a machine standing parallel to the new one.

"There was no senior assemblyman then," he smiled.

"Yes, we lacked a lot of things, then," he continued. "Under normal conditions, such as now, a senior assemblyman is needed for installing a 50,000-kw. turbine—a man who takes all the responsibility for commissioning it and turns it over to us ready for operation, f.o.b., Zugres, so to speak."

The chief engineer smiled again and repeated the words "f.o.b., Zugres," as though mentally recalling the situation at the power plant in January, 1944. Working conditions then were the usual ones—that is, for wartime.

On a September morning in 1934 an elderly engineer in semi-military dress with a map case slung over his shoulder strode up to the bank of the Krynka River. In the map case was an authorization putting engineer Yudin in charge of supplying electric power to the

liberated districts of the Donbas. Yudin walked over to the commander of a gun battery station on the river bank. "In whose hands is Zugres?" he asked.

"Conditionally ours," the young officer answered in a gay, confident voice.

Yudin stood, lost in thought for a few minutes, and then headed resolutely toward the river. A civilian, he had not grasped the real meaning the words "conditionally ours" conveyed in army parlance. But one thing had sunk in. Zugres was ours! That was enough.

Zugres had not been completely in our hands at that moment, however, as Yudin was soon to learn when he saw German tanks lined up behind the wall of a school building. He then immediately realized what a tricky phrase that was, "conditionally ours." He did not risk crossing the dam again; he had no desire to tempt fate once more. Instead, he joined up with the forward troops attacking from the east, and spent the rest of the day and all night at the firing lines. The thuds of explosions at Zugres echoed heavily in his heart.

In the morning, when the Germans had been driven from the station, Yudin went over to inspect it with a group of engineers. He clambered over the wreckage to the generator hall. He discovered that the generators had been blown up. So had the boilers. And so had the dam and the main controls. Yes, the Germans had been fully aware of the importance of this station. By blowing up Zugres they had plunged the entire Donbas into gloom, as it were. Throughout that day they continued to shell the station, but our sappers worked under fire and stripped the fuses from the twenty-seven tons of high explosives that had not yet gone off.

On the following day a dust-covered jeep drove up to Zugres, and a man in a dust-covered army greatcoat climbed out of it. Yudin recognized him at once: he was Nikita Khrushchev, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of the Ukraine, and member of the Military Council of the front. Khrushchev's first words to Yudin after greeting him were: "In what state is Zugres?"

The two men entered the generator hall, climbing over the twisted heaps of reinforced concrete that barred the way. Then Khrushchev asked Yudin whether he could submit immediately, or at any rate the following day, no later, a report on the immediate prospects for the rehabilitation of Zugres. He wanted not an approximate idea but a report as accurate as possible. It had to be brief and lucid, describing the extent of destruction, the possibilities of restoration, and, above all, had to set the time in which reconstruction could be carried out.

After Khrushchev had climbed into his jeep he leaned out and said a few more words to the engineer, evidently desiring to clarify what was expected of him. There are reports and reports. As a Bolshevik and as an engineer, Yudin had to realize that the revival of this station would determine the revival of the Donbas.

Yudin made another tour of the station. With the eyes of an engineer he inspected the damage, and with the brain of a Bolshevik executive he appraised it. As he walked through the settlement, he recalled the time he had been Party secretary at the power plant and had organized the planting of 45,000 saplings along the settlement streets. They had brought the saplings in winter on sleigh, had planted them, and had set up supports to prevent the wind from uprooting them. Then, in the spring, they had loosened up the earth and added fresh soil. They took firm root, those young maples, poplars and alders. . . Now everything had to be started all over again.

That night Yudin sat down to write his memorandum about the rehabilitation of Zugres. He had a pencil, but no paper. This problem he solved by taking a paper cement bag from the station's storeroom and cutting it into long sheets. Every word in the memorandum was carefully weighed against his ardent, heartfelt desire to see Zugres restored exactly as it had been before the war. He took into account not only his own potentialities but those of the workers, engineers and foremen, who, like himself, wanted Zugres to be rehabilitated as rapidly as possible.

"On the basis of a preliminary investigation," he wrote, "restoration of the first 200,000-250,000 kw. of the Donbas power grid is possible within a year and a half, and the first capacities to be commissioned three months after the launching of work."

The following day Khrushchev again visited Zugres. As he read the memorandum he kept his ear cocked to the distant thunder of an artillery barrage. Then he carefully folded the sheet of paper, placed it in his pocket, climbed into his jeep and drove off toward the west.

All that was left of one of the turbines in the generator hall was the foundation and part of the tubing. To all practical intents and purposes a new 50,000-kw. turbine had to be built. How was this to be done?

A discharge socket was sent from Stalinogorsk. An old cylinder case was shipped in from Siberia. A rotor for the generator was also delivered from somewhere in the rear. The Elektrosila and Khemz plants also rendered great assistance in building up the turbine. The most difficult problem was presented by the exploded drums of the boilers. It was solved by N. A. Efremov, an old Zugres foreman, who, together with the engineers of the Heat Technology Institute, worked out a theory of welding the blown up drums and then executed it brilliantly.

On New Year Eve of 1944 the 50,000-kw. turbine was tested in the Zugres generator hall which still presented a scene of destruction. All the mobile power plants in the Donbas housed on trains, were called in to give the turbine its initial start. Lights were switched off in towns and settlements, as the mobile plants transmitted their energy to Zugres where the first turbine was being born.

Chief engineer Kopelyan applied his steel stethoscope to the massive body of the machine, to determine the smoothness and exactness of the performance. One look at his face was enough to know that something was

worrying him. The smooth, rhythmical sound of steam in action testified to the normal functioning of the turbine. But the engineer had caught some barely audible wheezes.

When future historians write of the Battle of the Donbas they will most certainly include that episode when all the mobile power plants in the area thrice transmitted their energy to Zugres, to alleviate the birth of the first wartime 50,000-kw. turbine. On January 9 that turbine began to grind out life-giving energy that was sent out over high-tension lines to the Donbas collieries, mills, towns and settlements rising up from the ruins.

At the time the first turbine was being commissioned, a letter was received at Zugres from Stepan Ganzha, a soldier wounded in action on the Southern Front. Ganzha had been a gas welder at Zugres before the war, and the old workers there still remember him. He wrote to say that, as he was being evacuated to the rear, he had seen from the window of his hospital train, a discharge socket with the Zugres trade-mark lying near the tracks some nine kilometres from the station of Bataisk.

One of the Zugres workers, Gavriil Sushchenko, was immediately sent to Bataisk to investigate. He found the massive socket abandoned by the retreating Germans imbedded deep in the earth. It was pulled out with a crane, placed on a flatcar and shipped by express to the Donbas. This made possible the rehabilitation of the second turbine.

After the first turbine had passed all tests and had been hitched up to the power grid, a congratulatory telegram was received from Stalin. He wrote:

"I express the firm confidence that you will continue by your heroic labour and intensive effort to assure the rapid rehabilitation of power capacities, which will make it possible to restore our native Donbas coal and iron and steel area in a brief period."

This telegram of Stalin's is in the spirit of war period and the time of the first successes scored on the rehabilitation front. As I read Stalin's words inscribed on a bronze plaque at the power plant, I recalled the memorandum Yudin had written in September, 1943, when the Donbas was just being liberated. That memorandum, written on a rough sheet of paper torn from a cement bag, is the first page in the book of life and deeds that the men of the Donbas are creating.

Leaving Zugres I paused at the bank of the Krynka to have a last look at the site of recent battles and recent wreckage. It was early morning, and the tall windows of the power plant carried a fiery reflection of the first rays of the sun. In the triumphant light of dawn the new dam took on a roseate hue. I could no longer see the reinforced concrete slabs that had been part of the German fortifications here and had later been used as building material by the men of Zugres.

Translated by Rose Prokofyeva

BOOKS AND WRITERS

KALININ ON LITERATURE

The great Soviet statesman Mikhail Kalinin, who died in June, 1946, was a connoisseur of literature, and made frequent recourse to it in his articles and speeches. With Kalinin's death Soviet writers lost an understanding critic, friend and adviser.

Mikhail Kalinin was born in a poor peasant family in the village of Verkhnaya Troitsa in Tver Province (now Kalinin Region). His father's entire property consisted of a horse, a cow and one sheep. The decrepit hut, not much more than fourteen feet square, had been bought for 36 rubles. Kalinin spent his childhood in this village, and here he began his education, first taking lessons from an old retired soldier and later attending the village school. When he had finished this school, the local landlord Boltovsky took him into his family as a "errand boy" and subsequently, in 1889 the boy went with him to Petersburg.

Already in his schooldays Kalinin was an avid reader who displayed exceptional scholastic ability and a stubborn desire for knowledge. In the capital this wish for learning became still stronger. He eagerly read all newspapers and books.

"In the newspapers," Kalinin says in his reminiscences, "I was most interested in foreign affairs and politics. It goes without saying that my studies were unsystematical to the highest degree, I read whatever came my way and what I could find in the library of my employers. I went practically through the whole of the Russian classics as well as a number of scientific works such as Brähm's *Life of the Animals*, John Stuart Mill, and so forth. My reading was most disorganized, in philosophy as well as in belle-léttres, but by the time I went to work in a factory I was already fairly well read."

In 1893 Kalinin went to work at the "Stary Arsenal" Factory for a wage of eight rubles a month. This was barely enough to keep body and soul together, yet he managed to save enough to buy newspapers and magazines. At the factory he first came to know what the life and position of a Russian worker was; he subsequently described the conditions of the working class in his book *What the Soviet Power Has Given the Working People* published on the 20th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Two years later Kalinin went to work at the Putilov plant. Here he attended evening classes and continued his self education.

In 1898 he joined the Russian-Democratic Workers' Party.

In 1917, soon after the October Socialist Revolution, Mikhail Kalinin was elected to the Petrograd city duma and later mayor of Petrograd. In March, 1919, on Vladimir Lenin's proposal, he was elected chairman of the Russian Central Executive Committee. For 27 years Kalinin headed the supreme organs of Soviet state power, a living personification of the union of workers and peasants. He was elected chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. in 1922. After the new constitution was adopted, Kalinin was elected Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. in January, 1938.

Mikhail Kalinin was the embodiment of all the best qualities of the Russian national character developed by the proletarian revolution. And that is why he was one of the most typical figures of the new Russia.

Kalinin was a vanguard worker who acquired all of his extensive education not in the schoolroom but in tsarist prisons, in revolutionary circles, in intensive activity connected with the organization of the working masses, in the practical experience of governing the state. All his work was a vivid illustration of the teachings of Marxism on the historical mission of the working class. Kalinin was not only a follower of this teaching, he personified the practical wisdom of the Russian proletariat, enriched by the knowledge of scientific socialism.

A Marxist, as Mikhail Kalinin frequently said, must be a person of great culture and erudition. He himself was such a man. The range of his knowledge and interests was extremely wide—from the functioning of industry and collective farming to an exceedingly fine understanding of philosophy, esthetics, literature and art.

Mikhail Kalinin, a true teacher of the masses, a man who rendered invaluable services to public education from the elementary school to higher educational institutions, was, as we have said, a fine connoisseur of literature. He loved the classical and modern belle-léttres not only as the manifestation of man's creative genius but also as one of the greatest weapons in the fight for progress. His attitude to literature is, perhaps, nowhere so well defined as in his famous utterance: "A true artist must promote the development of human thought by his work. And the writer who does not set himself this aim is only a semi-writer; the actor who does not set himself this aim is a semi-actor."

Naturally Kalinin was not a literary expert or critic by profession, he was chiefly a reader, but an observant, educated and exacting reader. In Kalinin's speeches on literature you will not find a trace of rhetoric, flowery or abstract language. He is infallibly concrete. His definitions are to the point, concise and polished. He is a sworn enemy of well turned phrases.

"I am more a man of prose than of poetry," he said in one of his speeches. However, a

reservation should be appended to this self characterization. Kalinin was no lover of loud empty phrases or the aphorisms which so often hide dreary banality. In analyzing literature, he used the sober and profound approach of a man of the people, with all the wisdom of the people. This did not prevent him from entertaining a romantic love of literature and, speaking of it with true passion. In his interesting reminiscences of meetings with Kalinin, the writer Fyodor Gladkov (author of *Cement*) states: "He thought of literature constantly, it formed a part of his life from his early youth, and to his last days it was ever with him. I always felt that he had the soul of a poet."

Nothing could have been more alien to Kalinin than pose, affectation, pretentiousness. Everything that rang unnatural or false irritated him. He rejected all writing that bore the imprint of "formalism", of the destructive influence of formal experimenting in art, everything that was perverted and unnatural, calculated for the tastes of blasé snobs and not answering to the high demands of Socialist culture.

Life itself had bred in Kalinin this lofty, pure attitude to art.

"I must tell you, comrades," said Kalinin, "that life cannot only be measured by length. There have been men who lived for only 24 years, and again there have been others who lived to a ripe old age, yet when some time had passed everybody forgot these old men while the youths of 24, in whom there was a flame of ardour for the people, lived long in the people's hearts. And I do not doubt that a man who lived 20 years, and in these 20 years lived a full life, who suffered with his people and marched with them—if the people marched against an enemy, he also marched against this enemy, if the people rejoiced he rejoiced with them and sang their songs with them—I do not doubt that the life of such a man is ten times happier than the life of a centenarian."

To the end of his life Kalinin remained simple and modest. His reception rooms on Mokhovaya Street in Moscow were open to all and thousands of fellow citizens came to him with their requests, applications and proposals, to find a sincere and encouraging welcome.

The writer Gladkov, who more than once visited the "Soviet Elder" (as Kalinin was affectionately called by the people) has excellently conveyed the atmosphere of these meetings with the head of the Soviet state. "I think that everybody who visited him . . . felt comfortable, unconstrained, as though coming to see a hospitable friend. In his grey jacket and warm, knitted waistcoat, resembling a wise old teacher, he spoke volubly, with a clever little smile on his lips, a twinkle in the ever youthful eyes, regarding his companion wisely from under his eyebrows and over the top of his glasses. . . This homely simplicity, lack of restraint, sincerity and the permanent stoop—not of an old man but that of those who think much and have many cares—immediately set the visitor at ease and predisposed to frankness."

"I sometimes met him on the Mokhovaya," continues Gladkov. "He walked from the Kremlin, wearing a plain coat and a cap pulled down over his eyes, walked with a rapid busy stride, a thin little man, unnoticeable and stooping, with his grey beard buried in his chest, always deep in thought. His face was very serious, even somewhat severe. Sometimes the passers-by stopped and whispered 'There goes Mikhail Ivanovich.' 'Look, there's Kalinin.' And they followed him with warm and loving glances."

Soviet writers were frequent visitors in his comfortable study with the large fireplace into which Kalinin himself, threw fresh logs. He would have long, heart-to-heart talks with them. The reminiscences of Fyodor Gladkov and Mikhail Sholokhov convey some idea of the subject of these talks.

Talking with a certain writer Kalinin vividly expressed his conception of art: "Art is truth. Only truth is convincing and irresistible. Where there is no truth there can be no art."

In the works which he criticized, Kalinin regarded as the chief fault the fact that "the authors do not know life sufficiently, they invent."

He constantly emphasized that "Soviet literature" was a "mighty ideological force" called upon to educate the people, to illuminate their progress towards the future. Kalinin was always ready to rejoice at the success of a writer, and knew how to encourage those who failed. But he was up in arms against all those who lagged behind life, who wrote "bloated books . . . bloated books," he used to say, "are terribly boring, yet nevertheless many writers are in a hurry to turn out such fat packages. No, it is better to write less, but do good work. It is important to write sparingly, vividly, strongly, selecting carefully only the most necessary words, so that these few, expressive words may reveal profound content. Chekhov was a master at this."

A true artist must be free of imitation, must be original. "To create means to use one's own voice. To be oneself means to follow one's own road and not to lag in the rear. Never to wear another's cloak. There is nothing more disgusting than posing, pretense, trickery in poetry, in art."

The first condition for true art is sincerity, depth of feeling. "What is lyricism?" asks Kalinin. "It is the music of the soul, the song of the heart, the depth of emotion. When the soul suffers and rejoices there is no room for tricks." As an example he cites popular art: "Why do our Russian songs pull at our heartstrings so? Because into them the people have poured the full depth of their feelings, their sufferings, their sorrows and griefs, or their joys."

In speaking about his friends, the young writers, Kalinin said that they "have such sharp eyes, that they see much and sense things artistically. But they have not yet acquired an all-round knowledge of life or experience. . . Our life is richer than the literature of today."

"Our life is an ocean; and it is time for our literature to come out onto the open sea. Its role is that of an ocean-going vessel."

[From a speech delivered at a meeting organized by the magazine *Novy Mir* (The New World) in 1934.]

"What causes the workers and peasants of our country to devote so much attention to science and art?" asked Kalinin. "That," he continued, "is because only the people can give a true appraisal of art or science."

"In our country the work of artists is appraised by the people and the people cannot be bought, the people cannot be corrupted. Single groups may be corrupted but not all of the people. Our art serves the people, it must serve them. In our country, hundreds of thousands listen to the concerts of prominent musicians, see the artists' pictures, and they give their estimation. Can their appraisal be less exacting than that of the bourgeois public? It cannot be. Why? We know that the most gifted poets, the most talented composers became geniuses in their art only when they came in contact with the creative genius of the people, when they turned to the very roots of the popular art. . . There can be no genius isolated from this. . . In the course of scores and even hundreds of years the people created their songs and dances, preserved in them only that which was most valuable, polished them until they were perfect. No great man can do so much in his short span of life, only the people can do this. The people are the creator and the guardian of all that is valuable. Our great artists left the tunes which the people sing. But the whole order of things and all their surroundings divorced their creative genius from the people. The former rulers of society swept such artists aside, but we encourage artists. In our country an artist must go to the people in order to become great: if his works do not touch the multitude he remains unnoticed. Therefore, in our conditions the ties between art and the people are strengthening tremendously day by day."

Kalinin constantly emphasized the progressive, humanistic tendencies of Russian literature, which "ennobled man, forced the whole world to acknowledge those high moral qualities which have particularly developed among the masses of the people under Soviet rule."

As though in reply to those western critics who are inclined to see chiefly the ideas of Christian forgiveness and reconcilement in Russian literature of the past, Kalinin writes: "Through the whole of our literature, through the works of our best artists the idea of 'hatred of evil' runs like a bright thread, as the most noble feeling. And this makes art one of the most active means of fighting the enemies of mankind."

These traits—fighting spirit, implacability—appear to a still greater degree in modern Soviet literature, and in this connection Kalinin considered the character of old Taras in Boris Gorbatov's novel *The Unconquered* to be most typical.

Through many of Kalinin's utterances runs the thought of the great responsibility which the writer bears to the people. In one of his interviews with young peasant writers, he reminded them of the serious responsibility of the writer's work, saying that "a writer must be the master of his art." "If you want to be a true artist you must learn from former generations, you must master what is finest in the achievements of humanity, and starting from there, pass on to the new goals."

However, the mastery of form, the elaboration of style is not yet enough. The writer must know that which he is going to write about. "The writer must be able to observe and choose what is most typical. Such a choice cannot be made without generalization, but the generalization of the accumulated observations itself needs the guiding force of an ideal, of a definite philosophical and political viewpoint."

Intolerant of any mental indetermination and omnivorousness, of ignorance of social sciences and philosophy. Kalinin advises writers to study Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. "A true Soviet writer must be a Marxist." Kalinin called for the foundation of a real, not "evanescent" literature. "We cannot look back to writers of the type of Potapenko who in his time was a comparatively well-known author. I have read about a score of Potapenko's works and do not remember any of them. I read them at the same time as I read the books of great writers; and these last have remained vivid in my memory."

Speaking of Russian literature of the first half of the 19th century, Kalinin comes to the conclusion that it "considerably advanced political thought in Russian society, developed the understanding of the people."

According to Kalinin, the strength of Russian art in all its manifestations lies in the fact that its greatest representatives aimed at expressing the feelings of the people and were able to do it. This affinity of literature with the people, its active interest in the fate of the people, was attributed by Kalinin to the "specific Russian traits" of Russian literature. He extended this definition to all other branches of Russian culture.

In this connection, Kalinin singles out Mussorgsky amongst the Russian composers, and amongst the painters—Perov and Repin.

Soviet culture attaches great importance to the traditions of Russian art—in the literature, painting and music of the past. This is not the result of blind preference of native to foreign talent. All the achievements of world art are highly valued in the Soviet Union. The reasons why Soviet people attach special significance to Russian literature and art were summed up by Kalinin: "Our fiction always possessed a profound social content. And this made our literature a literature of the people. It inspired and urged people to revolutionary action. This literature showed the negative sides of the existing bourgeois-landlord world and raised the question of how to improve the life of the oppressed, the suffering, the poor."

In Soviet Socialist art the principle of serving the people has still greater significance. Kalinin devotes many pages to Socialist realism.

"The definition of realism," he writes, "was given by Belinsky a century ago. Realism means unity of form and content, when not only the outer description is truthful but

when the inner meaning of the phenomena is profoundly true.

"Belinsky's school is an honourable school. It has done a great deal for the education of our masters and has helped our art and literature to progress. Unity of content and form, of course, is also a part of Socialist realism. But there is a difference between Socialist realism and the former, pre-Socialist realism."

The best writers of the past were not only truthful from the purely artistic point of view; they searched for a solution of social problems and had a certain social ideal of a better life for humanity. But in this search, literature groped blindly, frequently stumbling and falling. It was more successful in criticizing the contemporary times than in drawing positive portraits of life, in creating positive characters. This does not apply to the literature of Soviet society. "In our country," wrote Kalinin, "socialism is not a dream but a reality. This real and not utopian socialism has to be expressed by the powerful art of a painter, writer, actor, singer, musician, sculptor, architect, and so forth... A Socialist realist must draw reality as it is without any colouring."

Socialist realism is to be found in a combination of artistic truth with a clear, concrete, social ideal based not on an abstract phantasy but on the actual experience of the fight for socialism. The clarity of a real ideal, which the writers of old lacked, can only be acquired by modern art through the scientific theory of social development. The experience of the fight of the working class convinces us that such a theory exists in the teachings of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

"... It is the duty of every Soviet art worker," said Kalinin, "—if he wants to be with the people, if he wants to be in the vanguard of the fighters for Socialism, if he wants to contribute a part of his ego to the construction of the new world—it is his duty to help the people to progress towards the achievement of the most exalted and noble aim—the construction of Socialist society." Socialist realism demands high ideals from the artist, the desire to march in step with the most advanced part of the people.

"The Soviet artist does not have to search for positive types and heroes. The interests of the Socialist state, the interests of Socialist society today occupy a tenfold, a hundredfold greater part in the mind of any Soviet citizen than was the case not only in old Russia, but in any modern capitalist state."

According to Kalinin the elements of Socialist realism are contained in a work of art when it portrays the new features which have formed in people under the conditions of the new social order, their new attitude to the world around them, to such conceptions as the state, the homeland; and first and foremost when this work of art is progressive. A true artist must be able to see those new features "which are usually barely discernible to the eye."

This statement corresponds with another speech on the man of the Soviet type which Kalinin made at a meeting of teachers: "A new man of the Socialist society is being formed in our country," he said. "And this new man must be endowed with the best qualities."

Noble tasks confront the workers of Soviet culture. "We are the first builders of Socialism, history has granted us this honour... The thought that we will be remembered by the generations to come for our great historical feat in the interests of all mankind, this thought cannot but inspire us now, and it does inspire us... And you," concluded Kalinin addressing a meeting of actors and painters, "as art workers feel and understand this best of all."

A considerable part of Kalinin's speeches and articles on questions of culture has been included in his collected works: *On the Tasks of the Soviet intelligentsia*, and *On Questions of Soviet Culture*.

Kalinin frequently touched upon problems of literature in direct connection with the questions of forming and inculcating the new morality. He made references to literature in one of his last articles *On the Moral Aspect of Our People* published shortly before the end of the war, at the beginning of 1945. The coming victory over fascist Germany was then already clearly outlined. Kalinin considered the moral strength of the Soviet people one of the most important factors of the oncoming victory.

Throughout his long life Kalinin was the people's tribune. He was a political thinker well able to analyze the interests and living conditions of different classes and groups of society, always prepared to support any progressive undertaking, to reject anything false, to abolish any social injustice, even when screened by flowery liberal or pseudo-democratic phrases. His profound wisdom, born of the people and permeated by sober caution and tireless energy in the desire for the common good, gave Kalinin his truly great popularity.

MIKHAIL BOGOLOV

A GREAT FRIEND OF LITERATURE

With the death of Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin our literature has lost a great friend and a severe, competent judge of the writer's craft.

Although brought up on Russian classical literature, with which he was thoroughly conversant and whose masterpieces he loved to the end of his days with the fresh, unspoiled fervour of youth, Mikhail Ivanovich always evinced the liveliest interest in any new work by a contemporary writer.

I saw Mikhail Ivanovich only two months before he died. He questioned me closely about my plans and asked how my new novel *They Fought for Their Country* was progressing.

"I have wanted to see you for some time,"

he said, "to talk about your book. I confess I feared that in writing a novel about the Patriotic War you might lose sight of what I believe to be a highly important point." And he went on to elaborate in detail what he thought ought to be reflected in my book.

When I replied that this coincided with my own ideas and that to the best of my ability I would endeavour to embody them in my novel, Kalinin paused in the act of rolling himself a cigarette to glance up at me from behind his steel-rimmed spectacles and a warm smile lit up his aged features for an instant.

"That's splendid!" he said. "Splendid! So all my apprehensions were unfounded." Then his face grew grave as he went on: "You see, it is not just books we readers want from you authors; we want good books, books that give a profound and exhaustive portrayal of our life. That is the reascn why I have taken the liberty of 'interfering' with your plans, so to speak. On such a great and grim subject as the past war from which our people emerged victorious and with such great honour, we want books that will live for decades, if not more. Yet look at what some writers are doing. Instead of giving their ideas time to mature, to take possession of their thoughts and emotions, they dash them off and before you know it the book is written—sometimes two books a year, in fact. But you read it one day and the next day you find you have forgotten all about the captain or lieutenant who was the leading character, and you have no recollection whatever of the heroine. Even their names have slipped your memory, and you have difficulty in recalling what the whole thing was about. That is because the people you read about were not real, flesh and blood human beings, but grey phantoms, and how can anyone be expected to remember a phantom? Moreover, if the writing is poor and the form of the novel leaves much to be desired, it is really not worth remembering. And so the work of the printers and publishers, the paper and money were all wasted, not to speak of the valuable time of the reader.

"Not long ago a writer sent me a thick volume published by a regional publishing house. The book was accompanied by a letter in which the author complained that the Writers' Union had done him an injustice by not recommending his book for a Stalin Prize, for in his opinion it fully deserved one. My eyesight is none too good, yet I went to the trouble of reading that voluminous work. Well, I never answered that writer's letter," Mikhail Ivanovich gestured hopelessly and smiled. "That was wrong of me, of course, but I couldn't help it. That book was not worth the paper it was written on, let alone a Stalin Prize. What could I have said to its author, who obviously hadn't a pennyworth of talent but plenty of conceit? He wouldn't have believed me in any case. But I did answer a letter I received from an old and clever writer who also sent me his latest book recently—a bad book. I replied and said it was a bad, cold book. That's exactly what I said: no good."

Mikhail Ivanovich paused and tapped his fingers on the table, smiling reminiscently.

"About 50 years ago," he went on, "when I was sitting in jail in Tiflis I got hold of a book by a well-known writer. I was in solitary confinement and this book was all I had to read. I read it and re-read it a dozen times. You would think I ought to have remembered it for the rest of my life, wouldn't you? Yet no sooner was I out of prison than I forgot it completely. And I have never felt moved to read it again. It was not a really good book. . . Yet it is enough to read Tolstoy or Chekhov once to remember them all your life, and when you pick them up again after many years everything is as familiar as if you had just laid the book down yesterday. True, even the 'immortals' produce works that, while perfect in form, are written with indifference and give your heart a cold feeling, as cold as if you had put your hand on marble. . . ."

Mikhail Ivanovich laid his small, shrivelled old hand on the table in a gesture so expressive that we who were present seemed actually to feel the chill lifelessness of marble.

"In my opinion a good book is one in which life throbs between the covers, like blood under the skin, a book you can remember if not always, then for a long time, one which you are always ready to re-read. Remember Chekhov's *Steppe*?" And he launched into a lively discussion of Chekhov, Tolstoy and Gorky.

Afterwards he asked me many questions about the life of the collective farmers in the Don region, and recalling a trip he had made to the Don front during the Civil War many years ago, he remarked thoughtfully:

"You've got fine people down there, as fine as any in our country. With people like that it is not hard to fight and build. The women are especially fine in your parts—industrious, persevering, strong willed. They never used to whine and whimper when they talked to me, never complained about the lack of calico or soap. But they didn't mince words either when they lost their patience. Oh yes, they were very plain spoken indeed!" He chuckled and his eyes crinkled in a shrewd, peasant smile. "Well, I think it's better to use some bad language when things are hard to bear than to whine and whimper, don't you agree?"

Speaking with great warmth of the remarkable vitality of our people, Mikhail Ivanovich told us the following incident:

"Once in the twenties when I was touring your area I dropped into an apiary. The war had just ended and the place had been badly wrecked. Both the Whites and our troops had had a go at the honey. . . But the old beekeeper who met me seemed in excellent spirits. 'Well, how goes it, grandpa?' I asked him. 'Fine, Mikhail Ivanych,' he replied. 'How's that?' I said, surprised. 'Look what the war has done to your beehives.' 'Aye, but there's one good hive left out of 40, thank God. And I've a sturdy family of bees in that hive. Before you know it there'll be swarms of them. Come in to see us in about three years from now, Mikhail Ivanych. You won't know the place by then. And I'll have some honey straight from the comb to treat you to. . . .'"

As I took my leave, Kalinin asked me when I expected to finish the first volume of my book. I mentioned an approximate date.

"Good, I hope I'll still be around to read it," he said. "But mind you take your time with it. Don't worry too much about us readers. It's our business to urge you to hurry, but it's your job to create a book that will be worthy of the attention of the people whose interests you are serving. After all, you're the one who will have to answer for the book and not the reader. Don't forget that!" Those were Mikhail Ivanovich's parting words to me.

Now, when the pain of our loss is still fresh I recall this final meeting with Kalinin and his story about the old beekeeper. And I cannot help thinking of our great Soviet beehive seething with creative endeavour, as our Homeland has set about putting its house in order after the war. Many years hence as our descendants pass through the Red Square and bare their heads before the tomb of Lenin, the greatest man of our epoch, they will pause in love and gratitude at the grave of him who devoted his whole life to the service of his country, the man who was a true comrade of Lenin and Stalin in their struggle for the happiness of mankind.

MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV

LIGHT IN DARKNESS

(*First Joys*, a novel by Constantine Fedin)

First Joys, Constantine Fedin's latest book is a novel about the past. The action is staged in a Russian provincial town at the beginning of the century.

Saratov in the early spring of 1910. A cab on rubber tyres draws up in front of an old, two-storied building with the sign "Doss House"; two gentlemen step out of the cab and enter the house. They are the local actor, Tsvetukhin, the public's favourite, and Pastukhov, the fashionable playwright from the capital. What has brought them to this place? The theatre was preparing to stage Gorky's *Lower Depths*, and the actor, who was playing the role of the Baron, had decided to mingle with the tramps in their own surroundings.

The reader will doubtless expect to encounter now a long description of ragged loafers, eternally drunk, of oppressing poverty and grief, and as a contrast, of course, portraits of old-fashioned merchants and flourishing *nouveau-riches*, self-satisfied officials and followers of the arts ever searching for novelty—in other words, all which the older generation have seen with their own eyes and the younger know from books.

The reader's guess is correct. All this does figure in the book and none of it is new; moreover, the very genre chosen by the author promises nothing new—it is the traditional realistic psychological novel. And in spite of this, *First Joys* is an original book, worthy of ranking with Fedin's earlier works: *Cities and Years*, *Brothers*, *The Theft of Europa*.

To quote Stendhal's apt expression, this novel is a mirror held over the highway of history. It reflects life's important and characteristic aspects. The world as the author portrays it for us, is not absolutely hopeless; from the gloomy depths of autocratic Russia with its leaden, stagnant life, police tyranny and dominant *morale* of "his majesty" the philistine, the eyes of the future free Russia peer out, full of hope and joyous expectations.

The book is written in picturesque style, yet with clear-cut precision. Fedin is a leisurely, fastidious artist, who chooses his words lovingly and with almost miserly nicety. Having renounced his former love for ballad-like "narrative" with its surface brilliance, he has achieved the art of presenting psychological portraits, which can only be won by years of painstaking work and observation.

Fedin's portraits as a rule are so precisely drawn and polished that another stroke of the pen, it would seem, would ruin the whole. The composition of this novel is based on the principle to which the author has adhered for a long time: "I seek to distribute the dramatic tension in such a way that enthusiasm should alternate with depression, the exalted with the low, always bearing in mind that in painting there are no 'good' or 'bad' shades but that everything depends upon the art of blending and distributing the colours."

First Joys is the first part of a trilogy planned by the author. Therefore, in reviewing it, we must remember that its plot is not yet complete, the fate of the heroes not yet determined, and the concept of the future still unknown to us. The book is not a long one, but is most comprehensive. It speaks about art and life, struggle and passive non-resistance, love and coercion, petty bourgeois morality and humaneness. But like rays of light focussed on a central nucleus, all problems lead to one—that of the formation of man and the citizen. Throughout there runs the thought—once so brilliantly expressed by the great Russian critic Belinsky: "Whoever is not a man first of all, is a poor citizen." By "citizen" Belinsky meant a man who had risen to the consciousness of his civic duty, devoting himself to the ideal of truth and freedom.

The heroes of Fedin's novel—Kirill Izvekov and Pyotr Ragozin—are conceived from this point of view.

The image of Kirill, the boy with the pure heart, purposeful and clever, captures the reader's attention immediately. "Hardness was the predominant note of the whole of his muscular, masculine figure. He was not tall, perhaps even short—one of those men who are called square: his sharp, angular

shoulders, determined jaws, the straight lines of his hair on his forehead, his mouth and chin all seemed to have been drawn by a draughtsman's pen. Only the glance of his eyes, of a warm, dark amber, seemed to have been touched by the painter's brush. He walked with his hands thrust under his belt, closing the gate with his elbows, and the whole of his sparse, angular figure showed that he was not easily to be shifted from his place." We first meet him at the moment when, having opened the gate to let in a girl running away from her father, a drunken navvy, he stands in the attitude of one who knows no fear where human dignity has to be defended. This is typical of Kirill. He is carrying into effect his childhood dreams of doing heroic feats. Later, he makes friends with the revolutionary Pyotr Ragozin and becomes a fighter for the cause of freedom.

The fitter Ragozin is a man of will power and action. "For a worker, the Revolution is home," he says, "he has nowhere else to go." Ragozin himself comes to the Revolution in this way, and fights on the barricades in the ranks of the workers during the Revolution of 1905. He does it unexpectedly for himself: the impulse that had matured in him merges with irresistible force, with the impulse of the rebelling people.

Ragozin spends a year in prison and three more in exile. But sufferings do not break him. On the contrary, they help to form his character, strengthen his social convictions, and enrich his experience. On returning from exile he is kept under police surveillance, yet nevertheless secretly renews his ties with the revolutionaries. Danger and hardships have not turned Ragozin into an ascetic, a martyr. Through all his trials he has maintained his cheerful good nature, his wit and friendliness, his tender love for his wife and home.

Ragozin's interest in Kirill is not accidental. He understands that this is a kindred soul. The following conversation is typical:

"I wonder what will happen after nine years?" asks Kirill. "What do you think Petrovich? Do you know?"

"I do."

"Well, what?"

"I shall be forty-four years old."

"Yes, I know that. But, I want to know whether things will be any better."

"They will."

"What do you mean?" asked Kirill, lowering his voice. "Will there be a revolution?"

"Aren't you clever!" and Ragozin burst out laughing. "If, I say no, you'll turn tail immediately?"

Very low, Kirill answered:

"I have chosen my road and will keep to it. No matter how long it may be—nine years or twenty-nine."

The tender idyll of Kirill's love for the schoolgirl Liza Meshkova and her love for him, the joys and miseries, raptures and disappointments—all that makes first love so irretrievably beautiful—is portrayed by Fedin in a series of delightful, tenderly lyrical scenes.

However, life rudely interrupts this idyll and throws its shadow over the first joys of life. Liza's father, one of the "pillars of the town", is the owner of the doss house and a rich hardware merchant. He has his own plan of life—to grow rich, and to this he subordinates his daughter's fate. The teacher's son Kirill, a student at a technical school, is no match for her, moreover, as in the conservative, bourgeois circles he is spoken of as a "disreputable lad." Soon this reputation justifies itself in their eyes: the police make a search of all houses under suspicion and find a printing press in Ragozin's apartment and revolutionary leaflets in Kirill's home. Ragozin escapes, but Kirill goes to prison and then to exile.

Under her father's pressure, Liza marries the young merchant Shubnikov, an idle young man about town, a wastrel and spendthrift. Her life is ruined, and unhappy and unable to bear the petty tyranny of her husband, she leaves him to return to her parents; but soon, she comes back to him of her own accord—she is expecting to become a mother and for the sake of the child she meekly bears her burden. She still loves Kirill and the unexpected receipt of a letter from him from exile brings her great joy. But it is too late. From the beginning her sense of duty, at first to her father, then to her husband, and now to her child, has barred her road to life and forced her to deny her duty to herself.

This is the main theme of the novel. We can easily see that there are three leading figures—the first, Meshkov, belongs entirely to the past, the second Kirill—entirely to the future. They meet, as the sunset and dawn almost meet in the short midsummer night—the former to die, and latter to bloom in the splendour of a new day.

Meshkov is contrasted to Kirill Izvekov, not only as the enemy of his personal happiness, but, and this is most important, as the enemy of the happiness of mankind, the enemy of humaneness and freedom. The basic features of his character are tyranny and disdain of people—open and cruel with regard to the poor and defenceless, masked with regard to those stronger than he. From head to foot, he is a man to whom accumulation of private wealth means everything. Of course, he loves his daughter like any father and, to quote his own words, he is not an enemy of her happiness. But apparently such is the soul of a philistine that even a good feeling becomes tainted by egotism and develops into a source of suffering for others.

"The feeling of love," wrote the great Russian critic N. A. Dobrolyubov in 1870, "can only be truly beautiful where there is internal harmony between those who love each other, and in that case it becomes the foundation and guarantee of that social well-being which we are promised in the future development of mankind, in the establishment of brotherhood and equality amongst people. But the wilful and stupid cannot be content with this—in the free and natural development of this feeling they discern a danger to themselves, and therefore they try, in the first place to kill the thing which serves as a basis for it—individuality. For this purpose stupid people invent their own morals, their own worldly wisdom, and according to their understanding the more the individual is

oppressed, obliterated, unnoticed, the nearer he is to perfection."

These words can be applied in full to Meshkov although he lived thirty years after Dobrolyubov. Meshkov does everything possible to convert his only daughter into a meek, colourless and weak-willed being. His system of education is a simple one—"Only obedience can save you, nothing else. . . How did I bring you up? In absolute submission. . . And what is obedience? How does the church explain it?" And he tells his daughter the fable of the monk who on instructions from a holy man, who had decided to test him, spent five years watering a post of wood driven into the ground and, in the end, reaped a reward: the post sprouted green leaves. The girl was forbidden to go to the theatre, to the park. Her father would not hear of her going to high school or preparing for any form of public activity. "I won't allow it!" and "I won't permit it!" were the words which she heard every day. But Meshkov only achieved his aim by half: he bred meekness and obedience in Liza, subordinated her will to his, inspired her with fear of the cruel patriarchal laws of family morality, but he could not kill her healthy, human nature or deprive her of desires.

Liza is at the age when the first traits of future character are just beginning to crystallize in the still childish soul, and the direct emotional conception of the world around often conflicts with a mentality which has not yet been strengthened and enriched by experience. The love of Kirill and Liza lacks the guiding rod on which all truly great feelings rest: common views on life.

Mentally more mature than Liza, Kirill well understands that youth does not justify an aimless existence. "I think," he says, "that youth has its own responsibilities. For after all, it is not important whether the will to action is inspired by despair or by courage. The important thing is how this will is used. The result of the effort is what counts."

True, in his passionate desire for a better life he is sometimes youthfully impatient and too strict in his actions and judgements. Thus, while admiring Tolstoy's artistic genius he is decisively opposed to Tolstoy's teachings of nonresistance, and therefore he removes the portrait of the great writer from his own room to that of his mother. Liza asks: "Would you go to see him?" "No, I do not agree with him." Such an attitude, of course, may be slightly comical. But at the same time it reveals a spiritual energy, a nature inclined to take life seriously and to draw logical, far-reaching conclusions from it.

Kirill does not initiate his sweetheart into his secret plans and actions. And she herself has not yet begun to think of the contradictions of life, and this is not due to light-mindedness but to the naive, childish belief that everything in the world is splendid, and that it is enough to wish for something, and kind fate will arrange the future. She is still at home in the philistine world of Meshkov, at home by habit, inbred from childhood. But already her first emotional conflict—her love for Kirill and the first barriers which arise between them—arouses a natural desire for freedom and happiness, although she does not yet perceive the fact that so many thousands of people are equally unhappy.

She enters into a loveless marriage with Shubnikov because she is the victim of a false sense of duty, the victim of Meshkov's simple but terrible philosophy: "As it was, so it will be!" Under the blows of fate, the first tragic notes appear in Liza's character. She had not formerly noticed the contradictions; now she came face to face with them but, being unprepared, she lost her way amongst them.

"Little by little she began to arrange her thoughts and with grievous bitterness to understand that in resigning herself to her duty, first to her father and then to her husband, in fearing to violate this generally-acknowledged omnipotent duty instilled into her from childhood, she had denied her duty to herself, about which nobody knew anything but which was undoubtedly greater and more important than anything else."

Our heroine is still far from an understanding of her social duty, but she has already made the first step towards this understanding: she has become an individuality.

We do not know what happens to Liza in the future, but we are eager to see her in the next book of the trilogy, for this girl with the "wind-swept hair" is touchingly lovely.

Other important characters in the novel are the actor Tsvetukhin and the playwright Pastukhov.

Fate smiles on Pastukhov: he is young, handsome, clever, gifted, possesses a fine appearance and that happy talent of pleasing others which inculcates self-confidence and lends a free and easy manner in society. His plays are applauded in both capitals, and his fame has reached his native town of Saratov, to which he comes to receive a legacy after his father's death, and where he remains to finish a comedy he is writing.

He likes the quiet of the provincial town. He is a proud "lone wolf", an artist wrapped up in his art. "He himself was sometimes surprised at his ability to protect himself against all things unpleasant: his eyes did not willingly look at sad sights."

Quite recently the whole of Russia had been shaken by the storm of the Revolution of 1905, but now there was quiet. The heavy prison walls stifled the moans of the tortured, and only the creak of "Stolypin's neckties", the gallows with which the tsarist minister Stolypin had covered the face of the land, disturbed this awful, dead silence. But Pastukhov has neither eyes nor ears for that which saddens. Neither does he understand the dreadful significance of this silence. He takes no notice of the excitement which is seething down in the oppressed, intimidated people. In the whole of the city he can find only two kindred souls—Tsvetukhin, the provincial actor, and Mefodi, a drunkard and an eloquent talker.

At the beginning of the novel we meet Tsvetukhin and Pastukhov in the doss house, making the acquaintance of the tramps. Pas-

tukhov, however, is displeased with his friend: why has he brought him to this "haunt of poverty?" Is it worth-while offending one's eyesight with such unpleasant scenes? Besides, Pastukhov has his own special philosophy of art: "I profess only one belief: my mind's eye is the god of art. The mind's eye, the omnipresent thought, do you understand? In my mind I see any doss house just as I see the Egyptian Pharaoh, so I see the peasant's jade or a member of the State Duma. This omnipresent thought raises and lowers me, helps me to do good or evil. In my imagination, in fantasy, I see the beautiful and the horrible, for I am an artist."

The artist—the magician, the priest, the lord, who has risen in thought above all time and space. We find analogous phantasmagoria in the writings of the German romanticists of the 19th century. In all times, the weak-spirited have wrapped themselves in the mantle of omnipotence. Pastukhov's splendid isolation is also born of weakness and fear of the dark sides of life. Pastukhov is no hero, he is a consumer of life, a philosophizing lover of pleasant things. In this way he differs very little from Vitenka Shubnikov whom he hates, who in the words of the author "approached human life from the sunny, pleasant side, like all who found life ready made for them by the hands of their predecessors."

Incidentally, both Pastukhov and Tsvetukhin belong to the camp of the dissatisfied. They also rebel against the yoke of the Meshkovs and the Shubnikovs. But they do not enter into conscious, political struggle, they are not threatened by the difficulties of the revolutionary underground, by the sufferings of prison, hard labour, execution. While the noble youth Kirill Izvekov languishes in prison, Pastukhov and Tsvetukhin express their protest against the prosaic rule of the petty bourgeois in drinking bouts, in the invention of dilettante and petty metaphysical theories, in "orgies of words."

But life mocks Pastukhov and Tsvetukhin cruelly. While it may have been possible to idle away time, to find oblivion in the cult of the imagination, nonetheless reality and its grim laws could not be evaded. The visit to the doss house proves fatal for the artists. Against their own wishes, they are caught in the maelstrom of affairs alien to them. After Kirill's arrest, Pastukhov is called to the secret police on suspicion of complicity, and he has to sign a paper promising not to leave the town.

The mental equilibrium and exterior calm of the artist are shaken. He is terrified and confused: what is to be done? In such moments, cowardly people often reveal their true selves.

Kirill's mother wishes to go bail for her son and asks Tsvetukhin for help. The famous actor refuses but advises her to apply to Pastukhov: "He is by calling . . . well, you might say, a public figure and will be happy at the chance to do something." (Tsvetukhin did not yet know that Pastukhov had been called to the police.) Of course, Pastukhov, also could not act as an intermediary, and an interesting conversation took place between the friends. In reply to the actor's words: "You can do it. If you want to know, it is your public duty. And then, of course, tradition. . ." Pastukhov replied: "The tradition of the Russian public conscience, yes?. . Turn myself into a knight-errant? What for? In order to respect myself? No? So that others might respect me? Is that it? Well, in the first place, we are far from being Korolenko, to say nothing of Tolstoy. . . And secondly, this is not the year of 1905. The time has passed. My knightly gesture, my sacrifice or, if you like, my heroism will not even be noticed by the local *Leaflet*. . . Just think of it, the public conscience—Pastukhov. A fly buzzing!"

Here Pastukhov reveals his true thoughts and the pettiness of his soul. His "God of art" turns out to be a chimera which deceives him at every step. Pastukhov himself, in the end, comes to understand this. During the last hour before his departure for Petersburg, once again a free man in the circle of his friends, Pastukhov draws several conclusions from his past life and his convictions.

In the first place: "We have days when we do not know what to do from morning till night. . . And before we know where we are, it is time to go to bed. Sometimes, I fear that the whole of life will pass like that. And somewhere, quite nearby, somebody else is forging our future. Through the jungle, torn and bleeding, some disreputable lad is marching towards the goal."

Secondly: "I now believe that the aim is the most important thing."

And thirdly: "We participate too much in life with our minds, my friends. I want to propose a toast that we participate in it less mentally and more physically."

This is a complete denial of his former disdain of reality, his overestimation of the role of the "omnipresent power of thought."

The self confident Pastukhov, who had prophesied the future of a philistine, a petty draughtsman, for Kirill, was forced to acknowledge the superiority of this "disreputable lad" over himself.

Of course, there is no reason as yet to speak of the ideological regeneration of Pastukhov. His conclusions are only the first step. But this step is the lowest rung on the steep ladder which leads to true humanity and civic consciousness.

In the character of Pastukhov, Fedin has portrayed the typical features of that group of Russian intelligentsia which after the defeat of the revolution in 1905 cravenly withdrew from all action and took refuge in drawing room mysticism, hiding their poverty of mind under the cult of the individual and of "pure" art, divorced from life.

In the background of the novel stands the grand figure of Leo Tolstoy. This is not an incidental feature of the novel. The life and death of Tolstoy were a grim reproach to the sleeping conscience of the professional, who in those years detached themselves from what was most important, i.e., from the people, from the constant reminder of their sufferings, from the search for a way of deliverance.

This review would be incomplete without mention of certain other characters who play

an important role in the development of the novel.

Vera Nikandrovna, Kirill's mother, is a true portrait of the type of mother who loves ardently and suffers bravely. In bringing up her son she seeks to instill in him her conviction that "falsehood is the inevitable result of coercion. It is the bitter fruit of compulsion." And the mother taught her son to love truth and to strive for heroic deeds. Her letter to him in exile is written in truthful, moving words, that come from the depth of a mother's heart.

Oxana Ragozina, who is the combination of a loving wife and faithful friend, and who dies a martyr's death for the cause of truth, complements the image of the heroic Russian woman.

The docker Parabukin, his little daughter Annochka, the colonel of gendarmes Polotentsev, the court prosecutor and a number of other figures form an integral part of the tissue of which the novel is woven, enlarging it into a grand portrait of life. The continuation of this novel holds great promise in store.

First Joys is a novel about a dark period in the history of pre-revolutionary Russia, but in it there is much light and joy.

ISRAIL MIRIMSKY

NEW BOOKS

STORIES OF THE NORTH

Ivan Menshikov. *Man Searches for Happiness. Soviet Writer* Publishing House. Moscow. 356 pages.

The young Soviet writer —Ivan Menshikov was a victim of the war when he crashed in a plane raiding the enemy's hinterland. "Ivan Menshikov wrote only a few books," said the poet Constantine Simonov of his friend, "but his capacity for work, his ardour for writing, his personality, character and habits indicated that he would yet accomplish a great deal."

A Siberian and the son of a peasant, Ivan Menshikov had a thorough knowledge of the life of the people, knew the histories of many tribes and nationalities inhabiting the Soviet Union. He had made a particularly careful study, however, of the people of the Arctic where he himself lived and worked for a long time.

Opening the book of his selected stories, *Man Searches for Happiness*, one is confronted with life in the raw, with man engaged in a grim war with the elements. We see the tundra and the orange tint of its moss, the sunrays quivering in the sea, the whitecaps riding the blue waves, the green icebergs trundling in the winds, the tents of the nomad reindeer breeders, the northern lights and the ragged smoke of solitary campfires.

Ivan Menshikov describes the lives of the Arctic peoples in the past. The northern tribes were on the road to extinction in tsarist Russia. Tormented by need and the scurvy, saturated with tsarist vodka and bullied by the predatory officials, the people of the tundra perished in entire families. The people of the Nenets tribe to this day remember those terrible times. In his *Legend of Tauli, Son of Pyrerko*, Ivan Menshikov gathered the northern tales about the evil servants of the tsar, the national heroes and struggle for liberty of the Nenets people. . . .

"And the birds shall find their homes
"And the seas, their currents,
"And the night, its end
"And the tribes, their happiness,"

chanted the people of the tundra.

"In the long, long night of the Eagle Month, when the creaking of the sleighs could be heard from end to end of the world—so fearful was the cold—Tauli, the son of Pyrerko, was born on the shores of the frozen sea." Such is the beginning of *Legend of Tauli, Son of Pyrerko*. In this story about the national hero of the Nenets people, Ivan Menshikov portrays the hard lot of the northern tribes under tsarism. Little Tauli was a real hunter by the age of nine. He knew the secrets of the tundra, the habits of the birds and animals. But even better did he know the sorrows and bitter need of the Samoyed, Tungus and Ostyak peoples. Young Tauli visited the reindeer breeders and hunters, discussed the hard life with them, urged them to struggle for liberty. The young Ostyaks and Samoyeds harkened to Tauli and followed him to fight for a new life.

And a wave of indignation swept the tundra. The northern peoples arose and drove away the evil servants of the tsar. But the tsar had many soldiers and the Nenets and the Tungus were without weapons. The tsarist hangmen tortured the rebels whom they captured, plied the foolish and the weak with vodka, bribed the shamans (medicine men), and by treachery at length seized Tauli and his closest associates. Terrible was the death of Tauli. His enemies buried him alive. But the Nenets people refused to believe that their national hero was dead. "With his mighty arms Tauli raised himself from the earth, walked the land once more, holding the arrow steeped in the scarlet of revenge, roused his comrades, the Nenets, to fresh battles for liberty and happiness."

The new times came at last and new people arrived in the tundra: the Russian woman (*Friends From Distant Parts*), the learned geologists (*Check Mate*), the doctor and the writer.

Ivan Menshikov here describes the formation of the reindeer State Farms, how the Nenets women, living in drudgery for centuries, emerged into the light, how their children began to go to school. The new Soviet life entered the domain of the long nights and eternal frosts. Ivan Menshikov was not only an observer here, but himself helped to build this new life. His short stories *A Present From the People's Commissar*, *The Rails That Vanish in the Blue*, and *Deputy* are devoted to the old hunter Egor Pyrerko. The life of Pyrerko had not been a happy one. For a long time he was a farm labourer,

but no matter how difficult he found things, he never wavered in his belief that better times would come. When the Revolution came, happiness at last found its way into the dim reindeer tents of the Nenets, and Egor Pyrerko became a free hunter.

No one could lay the snares more skilfully than Egor. No one trapped more animals and furnished the state with as many valuable furs as he. The fame of the old hunter swept the tundra, reached the cities and finally the capital—Moscow.

"A distinguished man of the tundra," people said of Egor in Moscow and he took to his work with redoubled energy. Now he was not only a hunter, but also an active organizer of the northern collective farms. His efforts were appreciated by the Nenets people who finally elected the old hunter a deputy to the Supreme Soviet.

Ivan Menshikov's stories are charming for their lyrical quality and for his ability to convey the whole gamut of colours of the northern landscape, the melodies of the vast tundra. The finest quality of his work, however, is the intimate understanding it displays of these people who emerged from the stone age to the new forms of culture and life.

Each story in the collection is a separate work in itself. The action of each story, however, is a continuation of its predecessor. The heroes of one story appear again in subsequent tales, all together they form a continuous novel.

There is an indefinable freshness about the descriptions and ideas relating to these remote, almost unexplored regions and their population.

The collection concludes with Ivan Menshikov's stories of the war: *White Kite*, *The Fatal Crossing*, and *The Little Nurse*, tales of the valiant companions of the author in the final phase of his brief, but courageous life.

STORIES ABOUT THE SOVIET SAILORS

Sergei Koldunov. *Lights of Victory. Soviet Writer* Publishing House. Moscow. 208 pages.

Twelve stories of the Great Patriotic War comprise the new book of Sergei Koldunov. Diverse in content, they are nonetheless centred about the general title *Lights of Victory*. Battle against the elements and human weakness, struggle and victory of the Soviet man under the most difficult conditions—such is the main theme running through Koldunov's stories.

The war produces complex and tense situations trying the moral and physical qualities of man to the utmost. The inner make-up of the heroes is best revealed in the performance of their duties. Victoriously emerging from all trials they are drawn ever closer together by their common experiences.

Most interesting are: *The Trap*, *In Ambush* and *Single Combat*, action stories of a Soviet submarine in the northern waters. The central figure in all three is the captain of the submarine, Shatrov.

The plot of the first story is simple: After sinking one of the ships of a German convoy, a Soviet submarine falls into a trap. The exit from the bay where the action took place is blocked by an anti-submarine net and the crew is faced with the alternative of a slow death at the bottom of the sea or with Nazi captivity.

Austere though he is, Shatrov is loved by his men; he raises their spirits and revives their hopes of salvation. By the heroic efforts of the entire crew, the submarine escapes from the trap of the Nazis.

Fine lyrical humour pervades the second story, *Tu-ru-ru*, which tells how the modest, rather funny head of a floating hospital, Dr. Berezin who never dreamed of naval or military honours, took the place of the skipper in an emergency and organized the rescue of wounded men from a sinking ship with intelligence and exceptional daring.

Koldunov's language, laconic and precise, is at the same time expressive in the description of events, seascapes and battle scenes.

ARMENIAN HISTORICAL NOVEL

Stepan Zoryan *Tsar Pap. Soviet Writer* Publishing House. Moscow. 201 pages.

The *Soviet Writer* Publishing House has released a Russian translation of the new novel *Tsar Pap*, by the Armenian writer Stepan Zoryan.

One of the older generation of Soviet writers, Zoryan began his literary career in the first decade of this century. As the son of a peasant, he is thoroughly familiar with the life and customs of the Armenian village. His early stories are written on the themes traditional in Russian literature at the beginning of the century and depict the monotony of life in the provincial towns. The reader is confronted with a gallery of skilful portraits of little people stranded in the mire of philistinism and concerned only with their narrow interests and petty cares.

The October Revolution and the events of the Civil War furnished the writer with new themes. In the short story collection *War* Stepan Zoryan depicted the psychology of the new types who emerged in society as a result of the Socialist revolution in the Caucasus. The plots of his latest novels are laid in the villages of modern Armenia.

Stepan Zoryan's new novel, written during the Patriotic War, but describing events of the distant past, dates back to the 4th century, and the struggle of the Armenian people for liberty and independence as well as progressive reforms of the Armenian Tsar Pap who fell at the hands of his enemies.

The Armenian people have many times taken to arms against alien invaders. Hemmed in between two powerful states, the Persian Kingdom headed by Sassanidae and the Byzantine Empire, in the 4th century, the Armenians waged a sanguinary struggle to preserve their statehood.

The young Tsar Pap, who had fled from the persecution of the Persian ruler Shapur, returned to his native land and, assuming the leadership of the liberation movement, began to introduce important changes limit-

ing the powers of the feudal lords, who were possessed of the major part of the country's wealth. Tsar Pap began also to curtail the rights of the clergy whose numerous institutions were a heavy burden on the people. The reactionaries within the country were quick to join forces against the young tsar and allied themselves with the enemies from without. Tsar Pap perished at the hands of an assassin.

Unfolding his novel on a broad canvas of the national life of his people, Zoryan has skilfully embellished it with the love story of the young warrior Raat who travels the length and breadth of Armenia in search of the girl Nazeni. The colourful scenes of battle, public festivities and the life at court attest to a profound knowledge of the subject.

The novel acquaints the reader with the customs of the epoch, with its peasants, warriors and feudal lords. One of the most interesting characters is old Jeremiah, a learned monk in the retinue of Tsar Pap. Urging Tsar Pap to carry on, the monk remarks: "If the country is arising, that means we still have the will to live. Struggle lies at the root of every living thing. When the body ceases to resist pain, it must die. Those who fight, Tsar Pap, do not die."

ALMANAC FRIENDSHIP OF THE NATIONS

Friendship of the Nations, No. 12. *Soviet Writer* Publishing House. Moscow. 302 pages.

The almanac *Friendship of the Nations* acquaints the reader with the Russian translations of writers of the Ukraine, Belorussia, and other nations of the Soviet Union.

The twelfth and latest issue of the almanac presents excerpts from the works of the Ukrainian poet Maxim Rylsky, the Belorussian writer Kozma Chorny, and of Georgian, Azerbaijanian, Armenian, Lithuanian, Daghestan and Turkmenian writers and poets.

Maxim Rylsky's poem *Victory* creates in sonorous and majestic verse an image of the Motherland common to all the multinational Soviet millions who arose as one man to combat the enemy.

There is something youthful and invigorating in the verses of the Lithuanian poet Salomea Neris, who so vividly describes her native land, its riches, and the industrious Lithuanian people at work in the fields and the factories. Her lyrics are a call to struggle for liberty, songs of the brave and strong of spirit.

This issue of the almanac also contains the verses of Alexander Abasheli, one of the oldest Georgian poets, an heir to the classical tradition of Georgian poetry, a medium which he wields with consummate skill. Especially popular are his collections of verses about Soviet youth and the October Revolution.

Of particular interest are the verses of Anvar Adzhiev. This poet, a Kumyk by nationality, comes from Daghestan, a country which had no written literature of its own before the October Revolution. The latter not only brought liberty to Daghestan, but also the possibility of developing its national culture. Only a few years passed and the people of Daghestan brought forth their own writers and poets. Anvar Adzhiev was one of them. He is thirty-two years old, the author of several collections of verses and during the war fought in the ranks of the Soviet Army.

The almanac acquaints the reader with the works of the outstanding Uzbek man of letters Khamza Khaim-Zade.

Lastly, the almanac contains the first part of the novel *Land of Fires* by the Azerbaijanian author Anatoli Zagrabbekov. The action, laid in the 12th century, the epoch of Nizami, describes the struggle for the possession of the Apsheron Peninsula.

LIFE OF KOROLENKO

Abram Derman. *Life of V. Korolenko. Children's Literature Publishing House.* Moscow. 144 pages.

"The difficult road of a hero," was what Maxim Gorky called the life of his elder contemporary Vladimir Korolenko who took part in the democratic movement of the seventies and was the last of the Russian classics of the pre-revolutionary era. Korolenko was incarcerated in the Vyshnevolotsk political prison, in the casemate of the fortress of Tobolsk, and was repeatedly exiled to the remotest regions of the Russian empire. Even before he earned renown, he was constantly under police surveillance, constantly facing trial. Kind and sensitive though he was as a man and a writer, Vladimir Korolenko remained an implacable foe of reactionary tsarism and exposed it with tireless doggedness.

A. Derman, the author of the recently published biography, who knew Korolenko personally and met him many times, was the first to write a complete and popular biography of him. The book reveals a thorough knowledge of the subject and deep sympathy for V. Korolenko.

The author gives a detailed account of the childhood, school and student days of the writer.

Korolenko was exiled for the first time in 1876 when he was not yet 25 years old "by imperial decree" for writing together with other students a collective protest against the actions of the academic administration who helped the police to ferret out the "politically unreliable" students.

His most remote exile was to Sloboda Amgu in Yakutia, in 1881 for refusing to pledge allegiance to Tsar Alexander III.

The biography gives a detailed description of the writer's life in Siberia, of his efforts as a farmer and cobbler, while studying the people of that faraway land with the keenness of an artist and ethnographer.

The publication of his short stories about Siberia (*Makar's Dream* and others) as well as of his story *The Blind Musician* was a great event in the life of V. Korolenko.

The biography cites much of the material from the *Multan Case* and the *Beilis Case*. Through his writings in the press Korolenko repeatedly exposed the hatred of tsarism for the people. In court he defended the

peasants of the village of Stary Multan accused by the tsarist police of ritual murder and obtained their liberation. Similarly, he exposed in the press the official organizers of the anti-Semitic Beilis trial. For his article *On the Beilis Case*, he was himself indicted just as Zola was once indicted for the Dreyfus case. The trial, however, never took place because of the 1917 Revolution.

Portraying V. Korolenko as a brave defender of the poor, an outstanding writer and democrat A. Derman's book analyzes the relations of V. Korolenko as a man and a writer to his contemporaries, chiefly, the great scientist K. A. Timiryazev, Maxim Gorky and Anton Chekhov.

The book contains a letter from Lenin's wife, N. K. Krupskaya, and excerpts from letters of Maxim Gorky reflecting their deep respect for Korolenko.

A BOOK ABOUT PAVLOV

Alexander Popovsky. *Ivan Pavlov. Young Guard* Publishing House. Moscow. 256 pages.

The *Young Guard* Publishing House has released Alexander Popovsky's book about Academician Ivan Pavlov, the great Russian scientist and leading physiologist of his time.

Popovsky's monograph is devoted principally to Pavlov's work rather than to his personal life. "All my life I have loved and continue to love mental and physical effort and, I should say, particularly the latter. I derived especial satisfaction when I could introduce and solve a good little riddle in the latter, that is, when I could combine brain work with physical work," wrote Pavlov in 1935 in a letter addressed to the Donets Miners' Conference.

The author introduces the reader to the scientist's laboratory, acquaints him with the pleasures and cares of Pavlov's difficult life.

Popovsky emphasizes Pavlov's love of man. "Man," he said, "is the highest manifestation of nature, the most complex and refined organism. To enjoy the treasures of the world, however, man must be healthy, strong and wise. The physiologist must teach man not only how to work properly, that is pleasantly and productively, how to rest and nourish himself, but how to think, feel and desire correctly. . . ."

In his thousands of experiments Pavlov disclosed the fundamental laws of the human organism, developed the science of the physiology of higher nervous activity and the results of his work will benefit mankind for centuries.

Popovsky skilfully emphasizes one of Pavlov's principal traits, his urge to move constantly ahead, his inability to rest on things achieved, his desire to do more and better work. In his old age, at the apex of his fame, Pavlov repeated Newton's sad admission to the effect that he felt like a boy playing with the shells on the seashore, while all the ocean of learning lay untouched before him. In his fine admonishment to the Soviet youth Pavlov once more declared:

"Never think that you know everything. No matter how highly you may be praised, you must always have the courage to say to yourselves: 'I'm just an ignoramus after all.' Don't let pride get the better of you, because this will make you persist in having your way, when you should give way; it will make you reject good advice and friendly aid and cause you to lose your sense of proportion."

Pavlov never spoke of his patriotism, but all his actions were deeply patriotic. The first years of the Revolution, the war and economic chaos, aroused his anxiety for the future of his country, for the fate of his people and their culture. The causes for the social upheaval were not quite clear to him who had been so far from political life before the Revolution. It never occurred to him, however, to depart for a foreign country where he could find peace and comfort. When he stopped in Paris during his travels and the correspondent of a Whiteguard newspaper approached him with the request for an interview on the Soviet Union, Pavlov told him:

"I won't talk about my country beyond its boundaries."

To this someone remarked that science had no country, but Pavlov angrily retorted:

"Science has no country, but a scientist should have a country!"

Pavlov spoke of the Soviet Government with great pride and affection at the 15th World Congress of Physiologists in 1935. In his letter addressed to the Soviet youth shortly before his death, he wrote about the grand prospects opened to scientists by the Soviet Union and exhorted young people to justify the hopes of their country.

Pavlov was equally great as a scientist and as a man. In the first years of Soviet power his laboratories were in a sad condition. There was nothing with which to feed the dogs necessary for his experiments, the scientist gave his dogs a part of his own meager rations.

When the government learned of his difficulties, a special commission was appointed to aid him, on the initiative of Vladimir Lenin. Maxim Gorky, a member of that commission, visited the scientist to learn his needs. Pavlov requested dogs for his experiments and horses for the production of serums. When Gorky said that the government intended to double his personal food rations, the scientist deprecatingly waved his hand: "What for? Just let me have what everyone is getting, no more."

Alexander Popovsky presents the complex scientific problems solved by Pavlov in a comprehensive way. The book reads like a fascinating novel and at the same time gives a clear idea of the context and portent of the physiological processes for the first time studied and made public by Ivan Pavlov.

THE STORY OF MOSCOW AND THE NAMES OF ITS STREETS

Pyotr Sytin. *Moscow's Past in the Names of Its Streets. Moscow Worker* Publishing House. Moscow. 158 pages.

Noteworthy among the numerous books published in connection with the forthcoming 800th anniversary of Moscow in 1947 is P. Sytin's interesting work, *Moscow's Past*

Cover for MOSCOW'S PAST IN THE NAMES OF ITS STREETS

in the Names of Its Streets. Briefly outlining the history of the Soviet capital, the book contains the following chapters: "Ancient Moscow," "Moscow, the Capital of the Russian State," "The Moscow of Ivan the Terrible," "The Moscow of the 18th Century," "Feudal Moscow," "Capitalist Moscow" and "Socialist Moscow."

Moscow is first mentioned in the Ipatiev chronicle (1147) as a border settlement of the Vladimir-Suzdalsky Principality. In the eight centuries of its history it grew from a shabby village to the capital of the first Socialist State in the world.

Each epoch introduced new changes in the appearance of the city, thus determining its growth in the shape of new concentric districts arising about the ancient Moscow Kremlin.

The centuries altered even the topography of Moscow. Numerous rivers and streams having been encased in subterranean pipes, vanished from the scene as did many hills, swamps, etc. The names of many streets, however, have preserved the memory of the ancient topography which is largely gone.

Growing in all directions, Moscow came to include many outlying villages, roads, etc., and the names of these are attached to the respective districts and streets of the capital to this very day.

In accordance with a plan of Ivan IV at the end of the 16th century, a great wall was erected about Moscow along the line of the present-day boulevards and the Sadovaya Circle avenues. The names of the ten gate towers in the wall still cling to the great squares that have taken their places.

Particularly expressive are the names of the Moscow streets commemorating the Great October Socialist Revolution. The population of Moscow, more than doubled in the interval from 1917 to 1939; it grew from 1,854,000 to 4,137,000. There was almost a corresponding increase in the size of the territory of the capital: from 17,700 hectares to 32,500 hectares. New and handsome city blocks replaced the bedraggled and unsanitary suburbs. The central districts, too, changed beyond recognition. The names of outstanding Soviet statesmen have been given to many of the old and new streets and squares of the capital.

Many other Moscow streets and squares have been named after famous scientists and writers, artists and composers, painters and architects of the past and present.

The names of the Moscow streets indeed represent a living Pantheon of the great men of the nations inhabiting the Soviet land.

P. Sytin's book is made up with taste and contains numerous illustrations of Moscow old and new.

CITY CONSTRUCTION

City Construction. The Academy of Architecture Publishing House. Moscow. 327 pages.

City Construction, a work recently published by the Corresponding Members of the Academy of Architecture of the U.S.S.R. Andrei Bunin, Lev Ilyin, Nikolai Polyakov and Vyacheslav Shkvarikov (edited by the latter), for the first time furnishes the Soviet reader with a systematic history of city construction in the principal countries of the old and new world, from antiquity to modern times. No such all-embracing work on city construction is known in world literature.

Modern Soviet cities are built according to plan and the authors of the book, therefore, give most of their attention to those epochs in which regular planned construction was the rule. These epochs include: antiquity, the epoch of the Renaissance and Baroque, city construction in the 18th and 19th centuries in Western Europe and Russia, and, finally—modern city construction in the U.S.S.R. and abroad.

Each of the twelve chapters of the book begins with a brief characterization of the cities belonging to the respective period, followed by a monographic description of the most remarkable cities of that time, and concludes with an appraisal of the importance of the given epoch in the history of city construction.

Much attention is devoted to the legacy of Russian city construction: the monuments of the Kremlin architecture, the monastery ensembles and the city planning of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Elimination of private ownership of the land and large estates created the conditions for real city planning. It was in the Soviet Union, therefore, that the fundamental reconstruction of the old and the construction of new cities was begun on an extensive scale in full accordance with the science and art of city construction.

The authors present a concise review of city construction in the U.S.S.R., and show

the importance of the reconstruction of Moscow and Leningrad.

The book concludes with an analysis of the urgent present-day problems of rebuilding the cities destroyed by the German fascist invaders.

The book is illustrated with 367 well executed city plans and views. A bibliography at the end of each chapter lists the titles of the chief works pertaining to its respective subject in the Russian and other languages.

COLLECTED WORK ON ARCHITECTURE

Architecture in the U.S.S.R., 11th, 12th and 13th issues (80, 96 and 112 pages), collected work of the Union of Soviet Architects. *The Academy of Architecture Publishing House.* Moscow.

The collected work, *Architecture in the U.S.S.R.*, as well as the magazine published under that title before the war, have dealt with all contemporary questions of architecture. The pages of these volumes acquaint the reader with the experiences of the architects, discussions of various problems and the works of architects in other countries.

Chief attention, naturally, is devoted to the restoration of the cities barbarously destroyed by the fascist invaders. The complex problem of rebuilding the cities from their ruins must be solved with a view to restoring the architectural monuments as well as preserving the historical pattern of the city and adapting it to the needs of modern industry and housing. This is the subject of the articles of N. Bylinkin under the general heading of *Chief Thoroughfare of Kiev*, of A. Pozharsky's article *Projects for the Central Square of Stalingrad*, V. Lavrov's article *Ways and Means of Restoring Pskov*, N. Kolli's and I. Kastel's article *Architectural Problems Relating to the Restoration of Kalinin.*

The question of organically blending the historical monuments with the normally functioning industrial and residential districts is also the subject of V. Lavrov's article *Ways and Means of Restoring Pskov.*

Each issue of the collection deals with one or more of the most important tasks of rehabilitating and developing the Soviet land—housing construction. Very interesting in this respect is A. Arefiev's article *Construction of a Residential Town Near Guriev.* This residential town was built under difficult conditions in the desert zone devoid of vegetation because of highly saliferous soil, with a hard continental climate; it was built of local materials and is protected from the wind and sandstorms by a belt of planted greenery.

A review of the contest for projects of one-story homes is given by N. Volodin who emphasizes the significance of small housing construction in the coming years.

Very clever is G. Borisovsky's article *Popular Creative Endeavour, the Classical Order and Modern Standards* (pertaining to a debate between the architects and the construction engineers).

Issue No. 12 of the collection contains excerpts from architect A. Burov's book *In Search of Unity.* Referring to his numerous travels, the author deals in literary form with the questions of architectural styles and construction scales, of materials and designs. His basic criterion for the evaluation of such architectural concepts as "construction scale" and "architectural composition", is their conformity to the idea that "architecture must be human."

Other articles deal with various projects and completed structures of Soviet architecture.

The chapters, "Abroad", "Architecture and Books", "Scientific Affairs" and "Architectural Legacy", acquaint the reader with current affairs in architecture and the assimilation of the legacy of architecture at home and abroad.

The collections are handsomely made up and richly illustrated.

ARTS

ALEXANDER SCRIABIN

The musical art of Scriabin has long since gained the recognition of world opinion. Once the general import of his ideas was grasped, the novelty of the style was speedily accepted. The legend, current since the early years of this century, of his music being hard to understand has been refuted by life itself.

A. Eaglefield Hull, the author of the best English work on Scriabin, writes that "in his musical achievements Scriabin has left a contribution to instrumental music worthy to rank with any of the great masters of the past—Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and Chopin not excepted."[1]

We are far from regarding all periods in the history of art as being of equal importance. The years when Scriabin's talent as composer was unfolding, marked in the West a period of advanced decadence that to a certain extent was reflected in Russia. No writer of that time unless he deliberately joined the camp of the opponents of capitalism, as had Maxim Gorky, could shake himself completely free of the shackles of decadence. Neither are they absent in Scriabin. And nonetheless we have in his music a remarkable specimen of those peculiar traits of Russian culture that made it in the latter half of the ninteenth century the most progressive culture in the world. Debussy and Ravel, whose names rank among the foremost French composers of the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, time and again expressed their delight in Russian music, particularly that of Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. It was Alexander Scriabin continuing the Russian classical tradition, who wielded the greatest influence in the early 20th century, shaping the taste and thought of musicians in his own and other countries. His creative searchings were not "modernism", but pure innovation, laying new paths in art while still making use of the classical achievements of his great predecessors. It is in this process that we must seek the key to his creative evolution.

But before we dwell on this question at any greater length let us turn to the biography of the famous composer, the seventy-fifth anniversary of whose birth is being marked by musical circles the world over.

II

Alexander Nikolayevich Scriabin was born in Moscow on January 6, 1872, in the family of a Russian diplomat stationed in Turkey. After a long career from interpretor at the Russian Embassy in Constantinople to Consul-General at Erzerum, Nikolai Scriabin had retired from the service in the eighties and settled at Lausanne, in Switzerland. Here he was in later years visited by his son in whose upbringing the father took no share whatever. The composer's mother had died of a galloping consumption in Southern Tyrol in the spring of 1873. Lyubov Petrovna Shchetinina—that was her maiden name, was a remarkable pianist whose gifts had delighted Anton and Nikolai Rubinstein and even Chaikovsky. On graduating from the St. Petersburg Conservatory where she had studied under the famous Leshetitsky, she, then only a girl of seventeen, had attracted general interest by the delicate artistry of her execution. A brilliant career on the concert platform was cut short by illness and early death.

It was from her that Scriabin inherited his musical gifts, the nobility of his mind and artistic insight.

His father entrusted the child's education to his sister, Lyubov Alexandrovna Scriabina, and the boy from his tenderest years responded with a fervent affection to the care and devotion she gave him. His phenomenal abilities showed themselves at an early age—when only five he could improvise on the piano. Among the stories of his musical ear and memory told by his relatives we hear that the boy after only once hearing Mendelsohn's *Gondolier's Song* and *The Gavotte* by Bach sat down at the piano and played the two pieces without a single mistake. When seven years old he played before Anton Rubinstein, but systematic study began somewhat later; in 1883, under Georgi Konius, the future composer and theoretician, then a student at the Moscow Conservatory. By this time Scriabin was al-

[1] A. Eaglefield Hull. *A Great Russian Tone-Poet, Scriabin*, London, 1921. p. 268.

ready possessed of a competent technique of composition of which we have evidence in his *Canon for the Pianoforte* written in the same year of 1883, but not published till after his death. It is hard to say how this technique was acquired; it was probably through acquaintance with specimens of classical music which imprinted themselves on the brain of a child of genius.

Scriabin received his general education at the Moscow Second Cadet Corps where he remained from the year 1882 to 1889. And it was in these years that the resolve to give himself up entirely to music became firmly ingrained in his mind.

He passed from Konius to the tuition of Professor Nikolai Zverev, at whose home he made the acquaintance of Sergei Rachmaninov. Under the guidance of this teacher[1] the two young pianists made rapid progress and it was not long before Scriabin began taking lessons in the theory of composition with the great Taneyev.

In those years Sergei Taneyev had come to be the recognized leader of Moscow musical life and he was professor and director of the Moscow Conservatory.[2]

Despite of the high position he occupied, Taneyev was exceedingly simple and kindly in his ways; he conceived a great affection for the young Scriabin from the first, recognizing his outstanding gifts, and surrounded the child with solicitous care, even to accompanying the boy home after the lesson.

In 1888, Scriabin was enrolled in two classes at the Moscow Conservatory—with Taneyev for composition and Vassili Safonov, the famous pianist and conductor, for pianoforte.

Scriabin could now give performances of the most difficult pieces which he would learn by heart in an incredibly short time. He never, however, allowed himself to be carried away by outward brilliance of execution, always striving for the poetical sonority that was such a distinguishing feature of the Scriabin pianism. In this, his skillful use of the pedal, was a very important factor. It is well known how Safonov once said to his pupils who were listening fascinated to Scriabin's playing: "Don't watch only his hands; look at his feet, too. . ." Even in those early years the "Scriabin pedal" was a term of high praise.

Scriabin was especially fond of Chopin—"the poet of the piano," as Franz Liszt called him, but he was as well an admirable performer of the music of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann and the Russian classics.

The eighties saw the appearance of Scriabin's earliest compositions—his sonatas, waltzes, mazurkas, variations and other pieces for the pianoforte.

In May, 1892, Scriabin won the gold medal in the final examinations at the Moscow Conservatory and his name was put up in golden letters on the marble board, headed by the name of Taneyev, hanging at the entrance to the Small Hall of the Conservatory.

In the following year several of Scriabin's early compositions were published in Moscow by the well-known house of Jurgenson, the permanent publishers of Chaikovsky's works. His name began to become known in Russia and abroad. Mitrofan Belyayev, head of a firm which published up to two thousand works of Russian composers, and organizer of symphonic and chamber concerts of Russian music, now proceeded to popularize the works of Scriabin, in large editions.

Working on the staff of the Belyayev publishing offices were men like Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov, and Glazunov who all, no less than did Belyayev himself, highly appreciated the rising talent of the young Scriabin. We know that in his *Chronicles of My Musical Life* Rimsky-Korsakov speaks of Scriabin as a "star of the first magnitude".

The Belyayev firm published over one hundred and fifty of Scriabin's works—both symphonic and pianoforte pieces. Belyayev, moreover, arranged Scriabin's first concert tour to Germany, Belgium, France and Holland, himself accompanying the composer throughout the journey.

This tour abroad was very successful as were several others following it, during all of which Scriabin played only his own compositions. In 1898, Scriabin appeared on the concert platform no longer alone but together with Vera Isakovich, a gifted pianist who was now his wife and who proved a brilliant performer of the works of her famous husband.

In the years from 1898 to 1903, Scriabin was a professor at the Moscow Conservatory. Those whose good fortune it was to study under him at that time all speak of the great influence his instruction left on their musical life. But teaching wearied Scriabin, the more so, since among his fellow professors there were some who had little sympathy with one whose art did not follow the pattern of a hard and fast routine. The ensuing friction tired and annoyed the great musician who now resolved to give himself up entirely to composition and performance. It is to be noticed, that like Chopin, Scriabin played better in an intimate circle of friends than he did in a large concert hall.

By the summer of 1903, Scriabin had given the world his fourth sonata and his first works for orchestra. Safonov invariably conducted at the premières; at the first performance of Scriabin's *Pianoforte Concerto* at Odessa, for example, in 1897, with the composer at the piano; at Moscow, in the early spring of 1899, at the performance of *Reverie* a miniature for orchestra; of the *First Symphony* in the spring of 1901, and of *Second Symphony* in 1904.

In 1904, Scriabin went abroad again. It was in that year that he completed his Third Symphony, his *Divine Poem*, performed for the first time in the spring of 1905, at Paris, under the direction of Nikisch.

About that time, Scriabin, now separated from his first wife, married Tatiana Schloezer, an admirer of his talent who remained his faithful friend to the end of his life.

---

[1] For these early years of musical tuition, see the article *Sergei Rachmaninov. Soviet Literature* No. 1, 1946.

[2] See the article *A Great Teacher, International Literature*, No. 9, 1945.

For some time during this period Scriabin lived with his father at Lausanne, and it was here that he wrote the famous *Poem of Ecstasy* performed for the first time at New York towards the end of 1908. The orchestra was conducted by Modestus Altschuller who, in the preceding New York season of 1906-1907, had directed the composer's First and Third Symphonies and his *Pianoforte Concerto*, when Scriabin himself played the piano solo. During that tour Scriabin also made successful appearances at Chicago and Detroit.

Following a stay at Biarritz in the summer of 1908, the Scriabins moved to Brussels where they remained for the next two years. Scriabin went back to Russia for a short while in 1909, in connection with the Moscow premiere of *Poem of Ecstasy*, given under the direction of Emile Cooper, but he soon returned to Brussels and it was not till the year 1910 that he returned to his native country for good. That same year saw the completion of his symphonic *Poem of Fire*, also known under the name of *Prometheus*, a work he had been engaged on for two years and in which his genius was unfolded in all its brilliance.

The première of this symphony which, conducted by Sergei Kussevitzki, took place at Moscow in March, 1911, proved a big event in Russian musical life. In 1913, *Prometheus* was performed for the first time in England under the direction of Sir Henry Wood and repeated in 1914 in connection with the composer's visit to London where he played his *Pianoforte Concerto*, and gave two recitals.

These were Scriabin's last appearances abroad, for although he promised his London audiences who had given him such an enthusiastic reception to come back again the following year, his promise was not fated to come true.

During the years 1911 to 1913 he wrote a number of new works for the piano including his *Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth,* and *Tenth Sonatas*. His last poems (including the famous *Vers la Flamme*) and preludes were written and published in 1914.

Scriabin's public appearance at Petrograd on April 15th, was his last.

On his return to Moscow he was taken ill, a malignant swelling forming on his upper lip, and developing into a carbuncle. Blood poisoning followed. At five minutes past eight on the morning of April 27th, 1915, Alexander Scriabin passed away.

His grave is in Novodevichi Cemetery at Moscow beside the graves of Nikolai Rubinstein and Taneyev; the latter catching cold at Scriabin's funeral died in the summer of the same year.

III

The heritage left by Scriabin contains the *Symphonic Poem* (composed in the years 1896-1897), which was not published till after the composer's death and has remained unnamed; *Reverie*, an orchestrated miniature; three Symphonies; *Poem of Ecstasy*, *Prometheus* for the symphony orchestra; the Concerto for Pianoforte and Orchestra; ten Sonatas, not counting the three early ones, and over two hundred other works for the pianoforte, mainly tone poems, studies and preludes.

Even in the compositions of Scriabin's earliest period, progressive criticism noted the emotional expressiveness united to profound intellectual insight. These first writings too offer clear proof of the continuity of the musical tradition of the two outstanding proponents of Slav musical art, Chopin and Chaikovsky.

As A. Eaglefield Hull stresses in the book we have already cited in the present article, Scriabin in all his writings "remains essentially a Russian of the Russians." And this, of course, is true not only of the composer's means of expression but first and foremost of his views on art. Of these and of Scriabin's attitude towards mankind, we learn much from his own notes published after his death and from the programs of his works.

From his great teacher, Taneyev, Scriabin conceived his credo of art as service to mankind; to its happiness, progress and freedom.

When still a youth, Scriabin had intended to write an opera to a libretto of his own of which several studies were made. The hero was to "vanquish evil and injustice throughout the world, and bring happiness to men."

"I shall make their life as the Spring," he said. And is not that the goal towards which Scriabin has striven in his music? His message to men was that they "should expect nothing from life but what they could create for themselves." "I am come to tell them that they are strong and mighty; that there is no cause for lamentation; that nothing is lost! Let men not fear despair; it alone can bring forth creative art. He is strong and mighty who has lived through despair and conquered despair."

"Life is activity, endeavour, struggle," we read in an entry to Scriabin's diary. This endeavour and struggle Scriabin embodied in his art. And that is why the themes of some of his compositions resound like calls to the summits of achievement.

Anatoli Lunacharsky wrote that in Scriabin's music "there is such elevation of soul, such a strength of protest, passion so tempestuous, a foretaste of rapture so intense that his music, more perhaps than any other, speaks a language akin to the spirit of our great epoch."

And it is indeed the inner intensity of Scriabin's music so impressively passionate, at times, rising to ecstasy, that first strikes and holds us in thrall. In his strivings for utmost power of appeal Scriabin resorts to harmonies that grow ever more involved. Some of his contemporaries, as we have already had occasion to point out, lacked the breadth of horizon that would have enabled them to follow him through the rushing impulse of his creative evolution, and at times he alone was able to ascend to those radiant heights of art.

The emotional versatility of his music is inexhaustible. Even in the early preludes for pianoforte we come across pages breathing of tragic pathos and lyrical charm.

One can hardly believe that images revealing such fullness of emotion were produced by a youth—almost a child—the famous *Study in C Sharp Minor* being written in 1886, when Scriabin was only fourteen years old, while the majestic *Study in D Sharp Minor* from the *Twelve Studies Cycle* Opus 8, was composed eight years later, in 1894, in the same year as the world famous *Prelude* and *Nocturne for the Left Hand*.

The great cycle of the *Twenty-Four Preludes* containing such masterpieces as the C Sharp Minor and E Flat Minor, are believed to have been written between the years 1888 and 1896.

This cycle was followed by the *Second Sonata* created in images suggested by the sea. It was conceived and begun at Genoa as far back as 1892, and completed in the Crimea in 1897. Of the same period are the dramatic *Third Sonata* and *Pianoforte Concerto* in three movements, of which the first and the last are rapturously romantic, while the middle movement written in the form of theme and variations, is imbued with profound contemplation.

Beginning with the late nineties Scriabin turned more and more to monumental forms, an example of which we have in his *First Symphony*, in six movements, culminating in a chorus, the text of which, composed by the author himself, is a paean in praise of art, a mighty weapon in the struggle for the lofty ideals of mankind.

"Oh, Art, miraculously recalling to life,
Powers weakened in the struggle,"

we read in this hymn to art, and further:

"He whom thou raisest up
Is inspired to golden deeds."

These words alone were evidence of how far Scriabin was from the "art for art's sake" concept so widely prevalent in his day. His motto was "Art for Mankind". He taught men to be noble, pure and manly, showing them how beautiful is life, how sublime the universe; how mighty the will of man.

The most inspired pages of Scriabin's music, are irradiated with volition; permeated with short themes, like imperious calls —they resound with tumultuous force in the Second and Third Symphonies. In the interval between these was written one of the best and most popular of Scriabin's sonatas, his Fourth.

In this work permeated by irrepressible ecstasy, Scriabin's optimism breaks vividly forth. The first movement is lyrically pensive, a mood evoked by the contemplation of a distant and glorious ideal. The second—impulsive, culminating in triumphant chords —a hymn to the will of man.

Here are the concluding words of the program prefacing this work: "Oh, gentle radiance, kindling into a burning sun, a blazing conflagration! Impelled by a mad desire I have drawn near to thee! I am drinking avidly of this sea of light!"

Scriabin pictured to himself the future of mankind as a sea of light; as boundless happiness conquered through struggle. This thought is expressed in his Third Symphony which he named *Divine Poem*, a work consisting of three movements: *Luttes* (Struggle); *Voluptés* (Delights) and *Jeu Divin* (Divine Play).

The program opens with the following words:

"*Divine Poem* shows the unfolding of the spirit of man: While tearing itself away from a past fraught with superstitions and mysteries, it overcomes and annihilates this past, attaining, through pantheism, a joyful freedom and unity with cosmos. . . ."

In this somewhat obscure verbal form (we must remember that it was written more than forty years ago) Scriabin expounds what he expressed incomparably better in his music, the titanic consummation, the victory over a past, whose prejudices and narrowness must be overcome, and the triumph of the future.

The *Poem of Ecstasy* is prefaced by a philosophical poem in which Scriabin uses the full strength of the orchestra, organ included. In *Poem of Ecstasy* Scriabin rose to a pitch of emotional intensity unprecedented in the history of musical art.

The idea of constructive volition becomes predominant in Scriabin's music and is revealed with stupendous force in *Prometheus* (known also as *Poem of Fire*). The orchestra here is even larger than in *Poem of Ecstasy*—a tremendous force of strings, wind and percussion instruments supplemented with organ, piano solo and a chorus, singing without words (and containing in the 1913 première at Amsterdam, five hundred persons). Moreover, in the score of *Prometheus* there is one line marked *Luce* indicating that the hall be flooded with luminous rays of diverse colours—a direction which has so far never yet been successfully effected.

Prometheus opens with a six-tone chord of unusual complication. We are told that at one of the rehearsals, Rachmaninov, an expert orchestrator himself, started in surprise when he heard this chord and said to Scriabin who was sitting beside him: "How did you manage to get that?" "It's not the instrumentation," Scriabin answered, "it's the harmony. . . ."

And it is indeed in *Prometheus* that the results of years of searchings, found their consummation. The images of the ancient legend of the titan Prometheus who stole fire from the gods and gave it to men are revealed by new and powerful means.

The powerful culmination of the chorus without words crashes forth in a hymn to the titanic bearer of fire—an embodiment of the loftiest daring of man, of the ever searching mind, of the unvanquishable will that kindles the flame of progress throughout the world. Scriabin's last works for piano are closely linked both in content and means of expression with *Prometheus* and other compositions conceived by the author to show the elevating influence of music.

Scriabin's kinship to Russian classical art is determined preeminently by the profoundly philosophical spirit of his music and its tremendous forcefulness and humanistic quality. It calls to struggle for a day when the unquenchable flame once upon a time lighted by Prometheus, shall cast its brilliant radiance over the whole world.

IGOR BOELZA

SCRIABIN DAYS IN MOSCOW

In connection with the seventy-fifth anniversary of Scriabin's birth—an occasion widely marked throughout the Soviet Union, the State Musical Publishing House is issuing a complete collection of the composer's works. The pieces for pianoforte (in two volumes) are edited by Professor Constantine Igumnov, and will include some of the composer's early works now published for the first time from MSS. preserved in the Scriabin Museum at Moscow, among them a Nocturne, a Waltz, two Mazurkas, Album Leaf, and a Sonata.

Another new publication is a sizeable volume of essays and material edited by Professor Igor Boelza—which contains letters written by Scriabin and also reminiscences contributed by the composer's friends, viz., his pupils, Margarita Morozova, the composer Alexander Krein, and the pianist Mark Meichik, all appearing in print for the first time. Of great interest are the reminiscences of Nadezhda Nikolayevna, the widow of Rimsky-Korsakov, published by permission of their sons, which speak of the friendly relations that existed between the two great composers. The collection also contains an introductory article by the editor, and essays by Ivan Martynov and Vladimir Protopopov dealing with the early works of Scriabin—an article by Alexander Alexeyev on Scriabin as pianist, an essay on Scriabin's harmony by Olga Sakhaltuyeva, and an exhaustive study of the composer's orchestral works by Dmitri Rogal-Levitsky.

During the 1946-47 season the Moscow State Philharmonic sponsored performances of all Scriabin's compositions for orchestra and the pianoforte, a number of recitals being given by the pianists, Heinrich Neygaus, Vladimir Sofronitsky, Svyatoslav Richter, Samuil Feinberg, Alexander Jokheles, Tatiana Nikolayeva, and others.

An exhibition was arranged by the Central Museum of Musical Culture, dedicated to the life and art of the composer, and a series of memorial meetings were held in Vakhtangov Street, in the house where the composer spent the last years of his life and where he died.

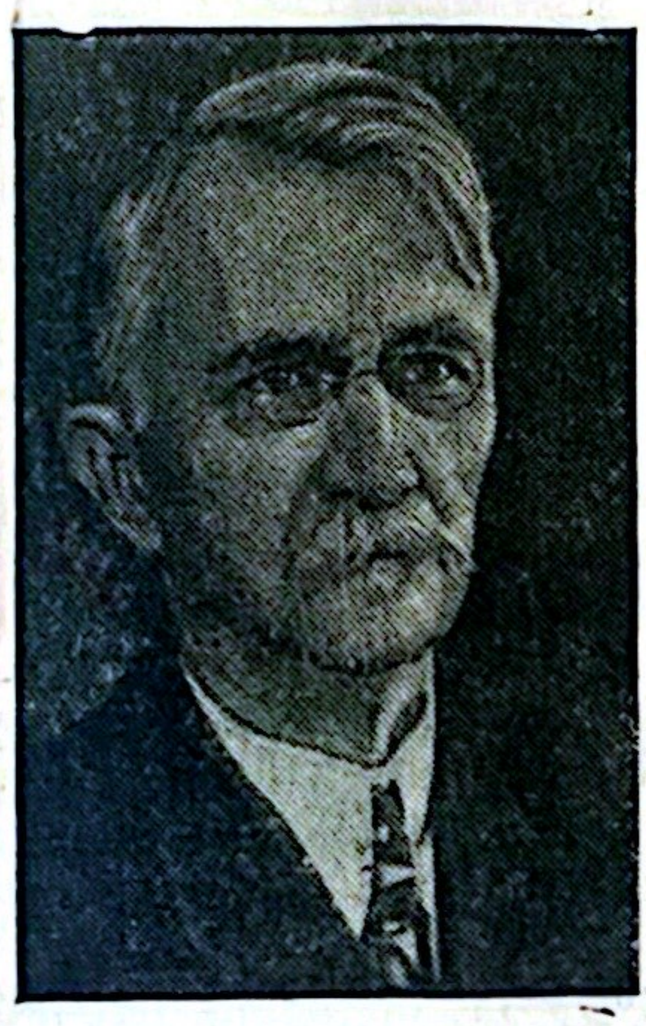
146

NEWS AND VIEWS

NEW ACADEMICIANS

The recent election of new members to the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. reinforced this headquarters of Soviet science with many more eminent names, including the departments of literature and linguistics, philosophy and history.

The writings of *Vladimir Shishmarev*, eminent philologist in Roman languages and authority on literature are well known abroad. In 1946 he received the honorary doctor's degree of the University of Montpellier. V. Shishmarev—disciple and close adherent of Alexander Veselovsky, spent many years in Italy and France, where he published his first writings which instantly won recognition. In his master's dissertation *Lyrics and the Lyric Poets of the Middle Ages*, V. Shishmarev put a number of important thecretical questions in a new light. The same can be said of his investigation into the part played by Clement Marot in paving the way for the French Renaissance, given in his doctor's dissertation. V. Shishmarev is not only a pioneer in the systematic study of the history of France of the late Middle Ages, whom many French literary scholars follow, he is also the author of several well-known treatises on the writers of the Italian and French Renaissance. His publications of certain French medieval texts are considered classical, and one of them won a prize from the Academy of France.



V. Shishmarev is the author of *Essays on the History of the Languages of Spain* and the only Soviet scientist to make a thorough study of the language of the Basques.

He did a lot for the study of the origin of the Rumanian language, and was the first to study the dialects and history of the Romanic settlements in Russia. V. Shishmarev is the teacher of several generations of Soviet specialists in Romanic languages and Western literature.

Victor Vinogradov—specialist in the history of the Russian literary language is a well-known linguist and theoretician. Many of his works are important not for the science of linguistics alone, but also for the study of literature. He adopted a new method for examining literary styles and a new approach to the linguistic and lexicological study of literary works. His capital works on the language and style of Pushkin, preceded by a number of minor works on the styles of the Russian writers of the 19th and 20th centuries, are examples of the scientific method he applies.

Vinogradov's ccntributions to the study of Russian lexicography and lexicology have also been extremely valuable. He was one of the group of authors who compiled the four volume explanatory dictionary of the Russian language. V. Vinogradov is likewise known for his many writings on the history of Russian lexicology and for his exhaustive studies on the origin of words.

Another field where Vinogradov made a singular contribution to science was his study of the grammar system of modern Russian. His two-volume works—*The Russian Language* gave him the 1945 Lomonosov prize of the Moscow State University.

Academician *Vladimir Gordievsky* — foremost Soviet authority on the Turkish language and Turkish culture, is also well known as an ethnographer, folklorist and historian. He is the author of a capital book on *The Seljuk Dynasty in Asia Minor*. Of his other works the more important are: *Silhouettes of Turkey*, an extensive work resulting from many years of studying that country, *Essays on the New Osman Literature, The Transition Period of Osman Literature, Models of Osman Folk Art*.

V. Gordievsky made a number of valuable observations and discoveries in the dialectology as well as the grammar of the Turkish language (semantics of demonstrative pronouns, the etymology of numerals, etc.).

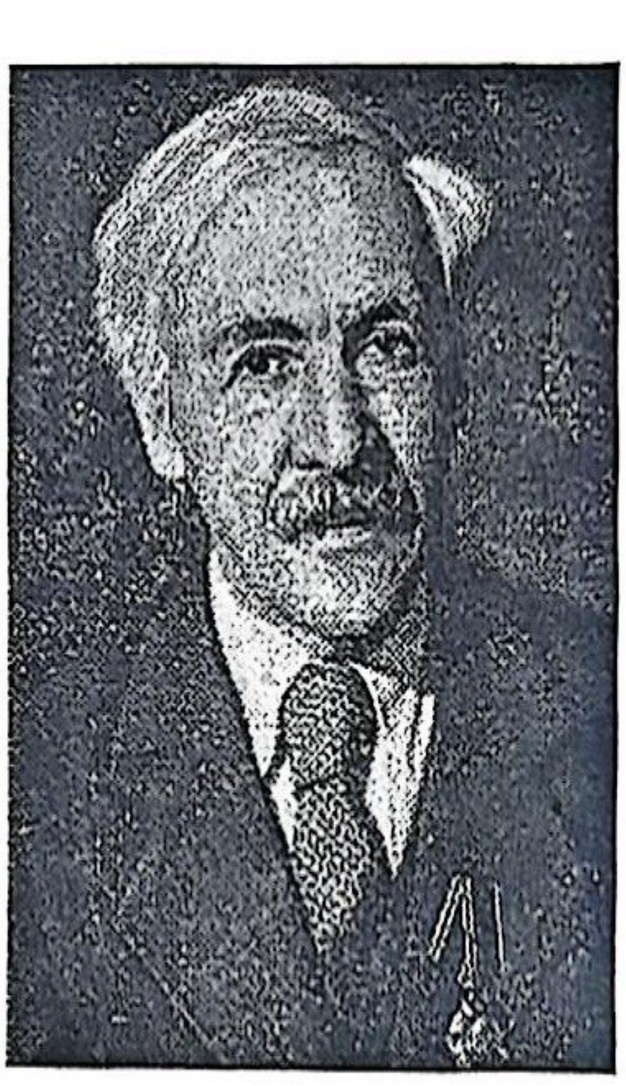
He wrote several textbooks on Turkish

grammar, literature and lexicology. He is the author of a number of books on Arabic linguistics. V. Gordievsky is also known as a talented translator from Turkish into Russian, and for his studies of the influence of Russian literature on Turkish writers. V. Gordievsky translated into Turkish some of the Russian classics (Leo Tolstoy, Chekhov, and others).

Pavel Lebedev-Polyansky—one of the oldest authorities on literature—is the author of twelve books and over 300 articles, devoted to the classics of Russian literature and Russian criticism as well as to problems of Soviet literature. He wrote exhaustive monographs on Belinsky, Dobrolyubov and a book on Chernyshevsky.

The Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., of which Lebedev-Polyansky is director, on his initiative and under his guidance, published a ten-volume *History of Russian Literature* and is preparing for print a four-volume *History of Russian Criticism* and a three-volume *History of Journalism.*

The works of *Ivan Tolstoy*, famous philologist, cover various spheres of classical philology—literature, language, mythology, religion and epigraphy. Even the minor works of I. Tolstoy are models of methodical exactitude, founded on factual material and therefore representing important contributions to science.



On quite a number of problems, chiefly on the roots of folk poetry in Greek literature of the classical as well as the Hellenic period, I. Tolstoy undoubtedly said something quite new. A considerable part of his research is connected either directly with Russian materials (epigraph of the Black Sea region) or are devoted to problems which are given a new interpretation in the light of the Russian materials (folklore).

I. Tolstoy's works on the origin of antique comedy, where he reveals its folklore genesis and social and political background, are of special importance.

Stepan Veselovsky is an authority on the history of the U.S.S.R., chiefly on the history of land ownership, serfdom and assessments of land of the peasant householder of the 14th-17th centuries. He is the author of a two-volume study of taxation in the Muscovite State of the 16th and 17th centuries. After the Great October Revolution S. Veselovsky devoted himself to the study of the feudal land ownership of the 14th-17th centuries and wrote a number of extensive monographs: *On the Question of the Origin of the Patrimonial Regime, Villages in Northeastern Russia in the 14th-17th Centuries*, and others. His research into the question of the genealogy of Russian feudal families is also an important work.

Evgeni Kosminsky is one of the authorities on medieval history.

Besides his studies on the agrarian history of England, well known in the U.S.S.R. and other countries (*Studies on the Agrarian History of England in the 13th Century*) and *The English Village of the 13th Century*), in which he gives a new explanation of the process of disintegration of the feudal system in medieval England, and the birth and development of capitalism there, E. Kosminsky took part in many collective works, either as author or editor (*Manual on the History of the Middle Ages* for colleges, *History of the World*, *History of Diplomacy*).

Since 1919 E. Kosminsky has published over a hundred scientific papers and books. Besides doing scientific research, E. Kosminsky does a lot of teaching. He also heads the group doing successful research on the history

of the Byzantine Empire at the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences.

Georgi Alexandrov is a noted Soviet philosopher. He also occupies himself with problems in the history of philosophy and sociology. Of his works on the history of ancient philosophy the best known are *Aristotle's Outlook on Natural Philosophy*, and *Aristotle's Social and Political Conceptions.*

G. Alexandrov wrote some works on the history of the birth and formation of Marxian philosophy and some critical works on the analysis of modern bourgeois philosophy and sociology.

In the years of the Great Patriotic War G. Alexandrov published a series of papers and articles, exposing the roots of fascist philosophy and a capital work *History of Western-European Philosophy.* Alexandrov is now working on questions of the history of sociological teachings and of philosophy and politics.

Ivan Maisky is the author of a number of books and important articles on questions of Soviet foreign policy, best known of which are his *Soviet Russia and the Capitalist World, Britain and the U.S.S.R., Japanese Silhouettes, Finland.*

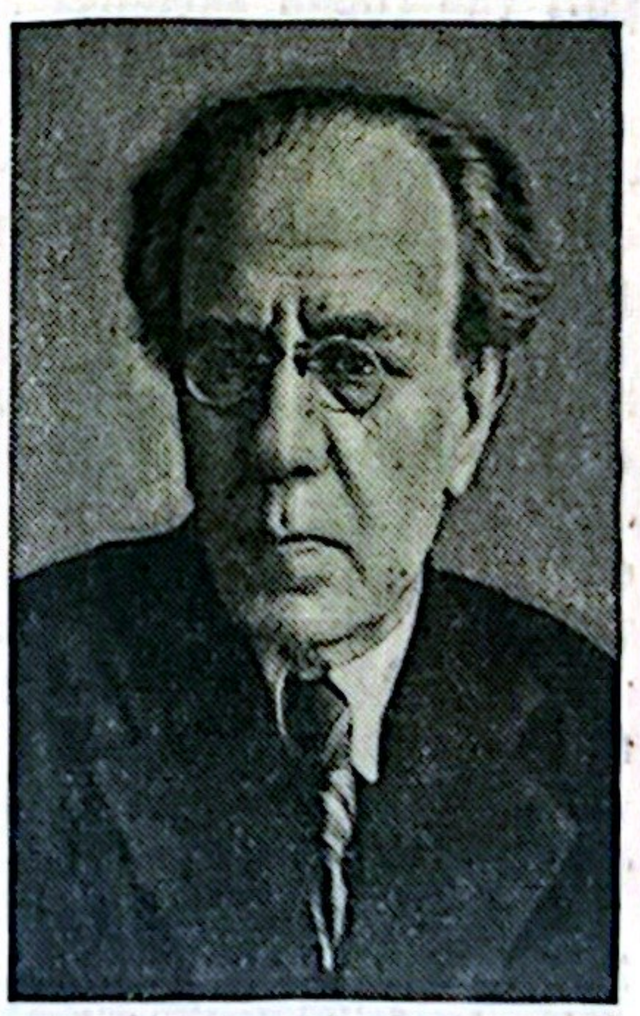
I. Maisky has also written on the history of politics and on the history of the labour movement in foreign countries (Britain, Germany, Japan and Mongolia). His most significant works in this field include: *Germany and the War, Political Foundation of Germany, Present-Day Mongolia, What Ails British Capitalism* (I. Maisky wrote four chapters of this book) and the *Origin of Capitalistic Japan.*

Isaak Mints dedicated his twenty years of scientific activity to the study of the history of the Soviet state and is the leader of a scientific school working on the problems of this period.

His chief writings include several chapters of the book *History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R.*, and a number of chapters pertaining to the period he studies in volumes two and three of *History of Diplomacy.* Other important works are his series of lectures on the history of the U.S.S.R., *British Intervention and the Northern Counter-Revolution, Japanese Intervention 1918-1922.*

Vladimir Picheta is the U.S.S.R.'s foremost authority cn the history of the Slav peoples. To him belong the important works on the history of Lithuania and of Belorussia, which constitute a vital stage in the study of agrarian history. Most important is his two-volume investigation *Agrarian Reform of Sigismund-Augustus in the Second Half of the 16th Century.*

Many of V. Picheta's works are devoted to the history of the Ukraine and to the investigation of Russian- Ukrainian relations in particular. Among them are *Tsarism and the Ukraine from the Middle of the 17th to the End of the 18th Century, Policy of the Muscovite State in Relation to the Ukraine in the Second Hal of the 17th Century.* V. Picheta dedicated more than fifty scientific works to the history of the Southern and Western Slavs. Of these *Historical Outline of Slavdom, Polish Historiography in the 16th Century, Age-Long Struggle of the Slavs Against German Aggression,* are his more noted works.



V. Picheta is now working on a *History of Poland*, the first and second volumes of which were completed in 1942 and 1944. He is the author of a number of books on the history of Russia, making a special study of the epoch of the peasant war and the Polish-Lithuanian Intervention and on the history of the Russian peasantry. Since 1939, V.Picheta has been director of the Slav Department of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences and head of the chair of the history of Southern and Western Slavs at the Moscow University.

LITERATURE

AT THE INSTITUTE OF WORLD LITERATURE OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE U.S.S.R.

Two interesting dissertations on problems of English literature were defended at the Institute of World Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

A dissertation for the degree of doctor of philology was submitted by Anna Elistratova, head of the western literature department of the Institute.

A. Elistratova is still a young woman (36), but she has already achieved eminence as an authority on the history of English literature of the Age of Enlightenment (the Age of Samuel Johnson). Her dissertation for a master's degree was dedicated to the novels of Henry Fielding. The works of Fielding were also the theme of her monograph, published in the collected volume *English Realism*. Elistratova's greatest contribution to the history of English Enlightenment, however, are her numerous articles appearing in the second volume of the *History of English Literature*, published by the Academy of Sciences. She wrote the essays on Shaftesbury and Mandeville, Pope, Steele and Addison, Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett and Samuel Johnson. These were what one might call the rough sketches of the major monograph *The English Realistic Novel of the Age of Enlightenment; Richardson, Fielding, Smollett*, which she submitted for her doctor's degree. A. Elistratova formulated the purpose of her work thus: "To examine the realistic novels of Richardson, Fielding and Smollett in connection with the social life of England and the development of the social-moral philosophy of the English Enlightenment, showing at the same time, how the very character of the realism changed and became more complex in accordance with the way they themselves solved, in the spirit of the new philosophy, the principal social problems of their days."

She accomplished this task most successfully. The book shows the broad scientific outlook of the author, the depth of her knowledge, the precision of her scientific approach to the problem and contains a number of original and well-founded generalizations which undoubtedly throw new light on the question.

Elistratova's dissertation consists of two volumes (more than 400 pages). The first volume deals with the theoretical and historical background of the English novel of the Age of Enlightenment. The chapter describing the literary sources of this novel—the picaresque novel, the periodical essays of Addison and Steele, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, the comedy of the period of Restoration, the Swift satire and Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in the specific interpretation of it in the 18th century—makes very interesting reading. A. Elistratova traces the connection between the Restoration comedy and the Enlightenment novel in a new way, she draws a convincing line which leads from Wycherley and Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar to Richardson, Fielding and Smollett. Very interesting are also Elistratova's observations concerning the singular connection between Richardson's novels and the chivalrous pastoral genre.

The second volume contains an analysis of the works of Richardson, Fielding and Smollett. First comes a general characteristic of each of the writers, then a detailed analysis of their novels, and finally the world outlook of the said writers in the framework of the ideology of that period. The chapters on Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe* (analysis of the psychological conflict of the novel and the development of the characters) and Smollett's novels, particularly *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*, are impressive. Very colourful and interesting is also the study of Fielding, in whom Elistratova sees the greatest exponent of 18th century realism, a novelist, who contributed more than anyone else to the consolidation of the new genre.

Elistratova refers to the authority of her Western-European and Russian predecessors (the author utilized over 250 works), whenever she thinks it appropriate, but views them critically, from the standpoint of the Soviet materialist student of literature. The author looks upon the development of the English novel from Richardson to Fielding and even to Smollett as a development of a more profound criticism of society, caused by the crisis of philosophic optimism of the early period of the Age of Enlightenment (Mandeville vs. Shaftesbury).

On this basis the author defines and estimates the works of each of the classics of the English novel of the 18th century—in accordance with the profundity and truthfulness with which they portray life in the English society of that period.

Another interesting dissertation, submitted by Samilla Maizels, *Novels About Scotland by Walter Scott*, won for the author the degree of master of philology. Proceeding from an analysis of W. Scott's novels about Scotland, S. Maizels examines the problem of the genre of the historical novel and advances the thesis that Walter Scott created a special type of social-historical novel, which heralded the advent of classical realism of the 19th century. She made a thorough study of the connection between Walter Scott's historical novel on the one hand and the "Gothic" and the English Enlightenment novel on the other; the latter connection is convincingly revealed in her analysis of *Waverley*. S. Maizels draws the conclusion that the author's revival of the genre of the historical novel did not at all mean a return to the world of the past, but on the contrary, showed his profound interest in contemporary life—the acute social problems prevailing in England in the early 19th century. History interested Walter Scott inasmuch as he sought in it an explanation of the social features he observed in modern life. This conclusion is further strengthened by an analysis of some of Walter Scott's other novels, particularly the novel *St. Renan's Well*, which, in the opinion of S. Maizels, western critics treated unfairly. Taken as a whole, the dissertation contains many original ideas.

IN MEMORY OF NIKOLAI OSTROVSKY

Ten years have passed since the death of the writer Nikolai Ostrovsky.

Ostrovsky's entire life is a shining example of selfless service to his people and country. As a child he learned the hardships of heavy toil, cruelty, injustice and oppression. The boy began to dream about freedom, about daring exploits for the good of the people. He read and reread the memoirs of Guiseppe Garibaldi, and thrilled to the tales of heroes who rose against their oppressors. After the October Revolution of 1917, when still in his teens, he joined the Red Army to defend the young Soviet Republic. When Civil War ended, Ostrovsky, who had not yet recuperated from his wounds, devoted himself entirely to constructive work....

But a cruel disease lay in wait for him. Paralysis confined him to bed. Ostrovsky did not lose heart. His body was paralyzed but his brain and heart were alive to the interests of the country. Soon a worse calamity was to befall him. He became blind. But even blind and paralyzed he continued to live, to struggle, and to create. He turned to paper and pen—he began to write, to dictate. He decided to write a book which would help young people see the wide and clear road of life and its noble purpose. His novel *How Steel Was Tempered* became in a short time the favourite book of thousands upon thousands of young people. Ostrovsky was actually conscious of the responsibility of the writer to the people. "Our youth," said he, "demand forceful, talented, truthful and moving books. And it is for us a matter of honour to satisfy them... We must uphold the honourable title of Soviet writer."

Ostrovsky died before completing his second novel *Born of the Storm*.

Maxim Gorky once said about Ostrovsky: "His life is a vivid illustration of the triumph of mind over body." In his letter to Ostrovsky Romain Rolland wrote: "You and your great, freed and resurrected people have become one. You have merged with them, and they—with you!"

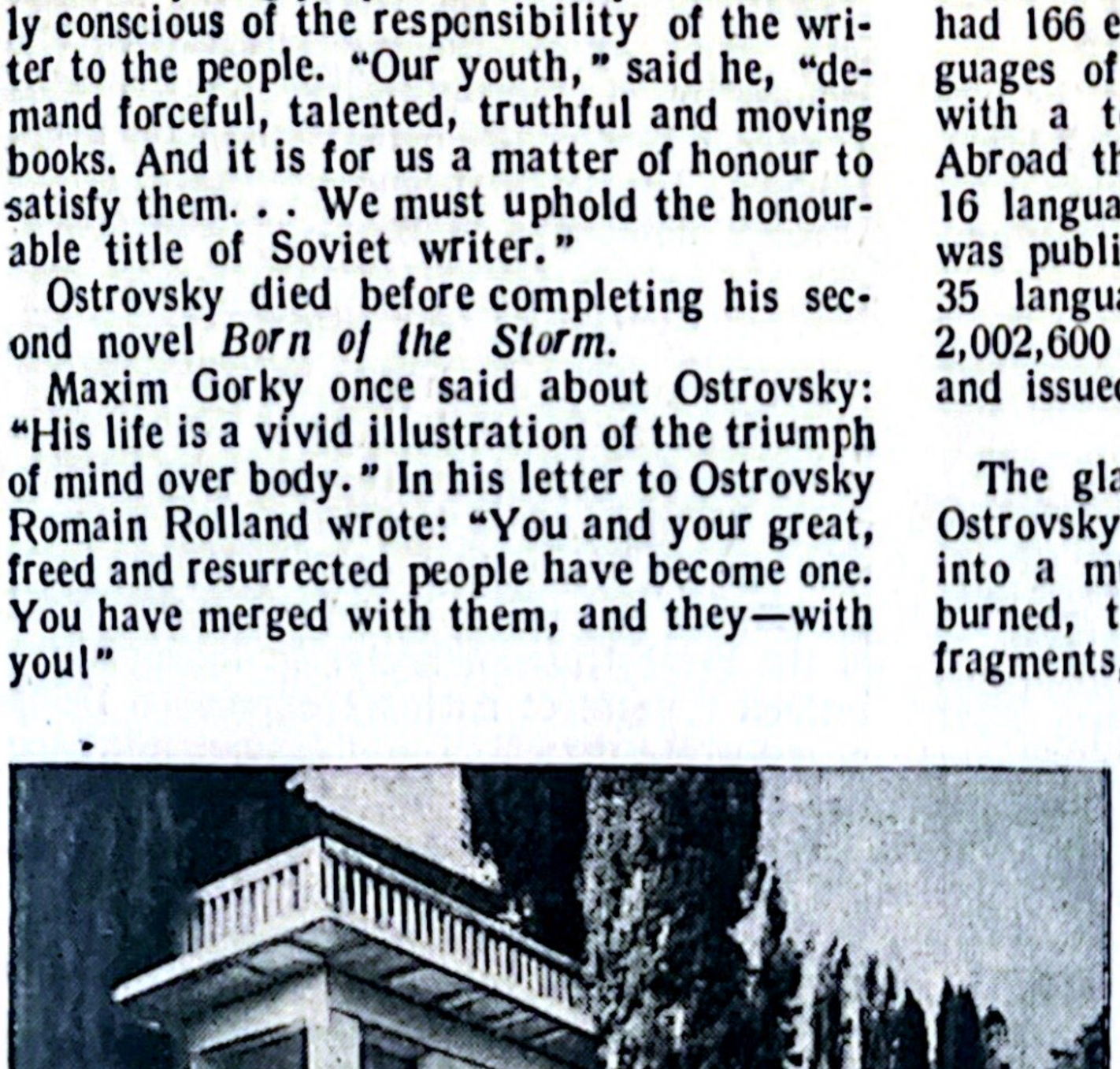
Nikolai Ostrovsky in 1926

Ostrovsky's books have been read by millions. The novel *How Steel Was Tempered* had 166 editions in the U.S.S.R., in 42 languages of the peoples of the Soviet Union with a total number of 2,642,000 copies. Abroad the book was reprinted 21 times in 16 languages. The novel *Born of the Storm* was published in the U.S.S.R. 93 times, in 35 languages, the total circulation being 2,002,600 copies. Eleven countries translated and issued it in large editions.

The glass stands in the apartment where Ostrovsky lived in Moscow (since converted into a museum) display the writer's books burned, torn, pierced by bullets and shell fragments, with traces of caked blood.... These books, with their owners, have traveled the grim road of war from Stalingrad to Berlin, from the Don to the Vistula. After the war the soldiers sent them as a gift to the Ostrovsky museum. One officer of the guards said: "These books have been in battle with us!"

On the tenth anniversary of the writer's death a group of students of the Moscow School No. 113 came to see the exhibits. They lined up in the big hall of the museum by the lowered banners. Then the widow of the late writer told the children how he had lived and worked.

Another visitor that day was



Nikolai Ostrovsky's house in Sochi

the aged writer Alexander Serafimovich. Soon the relatives and close friends of Ostrovsky assembled, among them were the singers Vera Dukhovskaya, Solomon Khromchenko and Pavel Lisitsian, who sang Ostrovsky's favourite songs.

In the afternoon a memorial meeting was held at the Novodevichye cemetery where the writer is buried. It was attended by writers, workers, army men and students. The writer Boris Gorbatov delivered a speech on the life and work of Ostrovsky.

A solemn meeting dedicated to the memory of Ostrovsky was also held in the Hall of the Moscow Polytechnical Museum. A report on his life and activities was made by the writer Anna Karavayeva, the writer's wife—Raisa Ostrovskaya—recalled episodes from his life.

Another memorial meeting on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Ostrovsky's death took place at the State Museum of Literature.

Nikolai Ostrovsky was born and spent his childhood days in the town of Shepetovka (Ukraine). Many of the townsfolk remember him well. Some time before the war, an Ostrovsky museum was opened in the town. The Germans looted the place and then destroyed the building. The museum has since been restored and now contains over 300 documents, illustrations, publications and pictures.

VLADIMIR KOROLENKO

Recently the newspapers featured the picture of a man with a grey beard, a high brow, thick hair brushed back, and a kind, penetrating glance. It was the picture of Vladimir Korolenko, Russian writer, whose memory the country marked on the 25th anniversary of his death.

A solemn meeting, dedicated to the memory of Vladimir Korolenko, was held at the Chaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow. The audience consisted of Moscow factory workers, men of literature, science, art and students. The opening speech was delivered by writer Boris Gorbatov. Professor Nikolai Belchikov spoke about the life and work of Korolenko. Extracts from Korolenko's diary were read by Vsevolod Aksenov, a Moscow actor.

Korolenko's literary inheritance is preserved at the Lenin State Library in Moscow. The manuscripts were presented to the library by the writer's daughters in 1938.

Sixty-eight files contain the collection of many of Korolenko's autographs, among them the original, the proofs and several authorized copies of *Story of My Contemporary*, which he started in 1906 and worked on until his death. Here, too, is the manuscript of the well-known story *The Blind Musician*, of which there are several variants. Even after its publication Korolenko continued to work on the text, adding new episodes and making various changes.

The collection also contains the story *Queer Girl*, which portrays the strong and fearless character of a woman revolutionary. The story, written by Korolenko in prison (1880), was banned by the tsarist censors. It first appeared in print after 1905.

Death cut short the work of the novelist on a book about Emelyan Pugachev. The manuscript of the unfinished novel entitled *Insurgent Tsar* is also being kept at the Lenin Library. This archive contains many of the writer's notebooks of the 1879-1900 period.

Vladimir Korolenko

OSSETIAN POET

Soviet literature marked the 50th anniversary of the birth and the 30th of the activities of the noted North-Ossetian poet Ivan Dzhanayev (Nigher). The rhythms of Ossetian popular poetry daringly blend in Dzhanayev's verse with the tunes he heard in the works of the great Russian poets. In the pre-revolutionary years of national oppression Dzhanayev wrote that he would convert into song the groans and tears of the Ossetians.

The characters of his poetry changed when his former hero—"The Homeless Son of Ossetia"—became the master of his land. Dzhanayev's poetry was now permeated with optimism, radiance and joy. In the years of the Great Patriotic War his poems called upon the youth of Ossetia to tighten the girths of their steeds and charge the foe.

Having spent many years in the study of the epic legends of the Ossetian people, Dzhanayev in his war poems resurrected the heroes and the ancient battle traditions of the proud and freedom-loving people of Ossetia.

IN MAYAKOVSKY'S HOME TOWN

The Georgian village of Bagdadi is situated in a picturesque valley, surrounded by high mountains. Vineyards spread out on all sides; little log cottages stand in the foothills.

The village of Bagdadi, the birthplace of Vladimir Mayakovsky

In one of them, located on the bank of the fast stream Khanis-Tskhali, lived the Mayakovsky family. A narrow path leads to the house where the poet was born. A signboard above the gate bears the inscription: "Vladimir Mayakovsky Museum-House."

The rooms retain the appearance they had when occupied by the Mayakovsky family. In the first room—a table with a large abacus, an inkstand, a candlestick and an ash tray. Against the wall stands an old bookcase with samples of timber, which the poet's father—a forester—had collected. On the wall hangs a small embroidered brief case—a present to the poet from his sister. In the adjoining room there is another table with magazines of the last century. Beside them lie books. The furniture is very modest.

Most interesting are the exhibits depicting Mayakovsky's schooldays: a letter to his parents, examination lists with subject marks, copybooks, and a hand saw he used.

LITERARY COMPOSITION
THE YOUNG GUARD

Alexander Fadeyev's novel *The Young Guard*, which has thrilled millions of readers, is naturally arousing the interest of the adjacent arts—the theatre and the cinema. Several theatres are working on the dramatization of *The Young Guard*, the heroic epic of the Krasnodon youthful underground workers will also be screened. . . .

The literary composition *The Young Guard* performed by actors Sofia Fadeyeva and Nikolai Pershin is having great success.

The stage has no scenery, nothing but a few chairs and a small table. The readers are dressed in ordinary clothes. . . But several minutes elapse and the listeners are carried away to the limitless steppes of the Donets, across which move German tanks, to the miners' town of Krasnodon, to the tiny cottages. . . The audience seems to see the brave lads and girls of Krasnodon: the leader of the underground organization Oleg Koshevoy, romantic and steadfast Ulya Gromova, cheerful quick-witted Lyuba Shevtsova, daring, determined Sergei Tyulenin, the kind and honest Ivan Zemnukhov—all those whose names are familiar to every man, woman and child in the Soviet Union, whose images are so vividly depicted in the novel *The Young Guard*.

The readers Sofia Fadeyeva and Nikolai Pershin adopted an original duet mode of presentation. The reading is not carried on in turns, mechanically; the readers change when the pathos of the situation calls for it and not only when the time and place of action shifts, but also when the tonality of events and the mood changes.

This new literary composition is a continuation of the series of readings of great works of literature. Very successful have also been the readings of Mikhail Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don*, by Dmitri Orlov, the literary compositions on *David Sassunsky* and Leo Tolstoy's *The Kruetzer Sonata*, read by Suren Kocharyan.

THEATRE

THE OPERA *SEVASTOPOLITES*

The opera *Sevastopolites*, written by composer Marian Koval, is a composition of the war years.

. . . A fishing village near Sevastopol. The collective farmers are celebrating a holiday. Suddenly bombs explode. Hitler Germany had attacked the peaceful Soviet Union. The fishermen leave for the front. . . The second act takes the audience to the Sevastopol quarries—to the workshops engaged in war production, and to the hospitals where women work. The third act shows the tragic days of the battle of Sevastopol. The last cutter leaves with the wounded, the women and the children. A small marine detachment remains on shore. They contest every inch of ground against tremendous odds. The fourth act is laid in the Crimean mountains where the heroic partisans continue the struggle against the invader. The opera ends with a solemn cantata in honour of the hero-city.

The music of the opera is emotional, it is expressively melodious and its harmony is fresh. The choral numbers are particularly impressive: the women's chorus in the quarry and the dramatic choral episode preceding

the departure of the cutter from the besieged city. The song of Sevastopol is also very stirring. Here sorrow mingles with pride and faith in victory.

The opera was produced by the Opera and Ballet Theatre at the town of Molotov.

HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN THEATRE

The Institute of the History of Arts of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. is preparing a six-volume history of the Russian theatre.

The first volume will contain descriptions of ancient folk games and rites, the theatre in the reign of Alexei Mikhailovich, Peter I, the theatre of Russian classicism (second half of the 18th century).

The second volume will contain the history of the Russian theatre of the first quarter of the 19th century and will include the period up to the appearance of such works as Alexander Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe*, Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*.

Volumes three, four and five will cover the period from 1825 to 1917. These will contain chapters on the Russian classical playwrights (beginning with Nikolai Gogol, down to Anton Chekhov and Maxim Gorky), on outstanding Russian actors, including the famous Pavel Mochalov and the fine masters of the Maly and Art theatres.

The last (sixth) volume will be dedicated to the theatre of Soviet times.

Professors Mikhail Grigoryev, Boris Alpers and Sergei Durylin are the chief editors of the *History of the Russian Theatre.*

Mikhail Glinka (from an old daguerrotype)

GLINKA'S LIFE AND MUSIC

An exhibition devoted to the founder of the Russian classical school of music, Mikhail Glinka, has been opened in the building of the State Conservatory at Moscow. The manuscripts, photographs, engravings and letters on view give a faithful picture of the successive phases of the composer's life.

As you enter the first of the halls you see a sculpture of Glinka—a bust of recent workmanship showing the composer in the latter years of his life. All round hang portraits of Russian musicians—composers and critics—Alexander Serov, Alexander Dargomyzhsky, Modest Mussorgsky, Mili Balakirev, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Pyotr Chaikovsky, Vladimir Odoyevsky, Vladimir Stasov. . . The showcases and stands contain musical works, letters and other documents, all connected in one way or another with the name of Glinka.

The stands that first meet your eye are devoted to his childhood and youth: views of his birthplace, Novospasskoye, and of Shmakovo, a neighbouring estate, where Glinka frequently went to listen to the orchestra of serf musicians. Among these landscapes are a number of water colours painted by Vera Glinka, a grandniece of the composer of whose pictures we wrote in our magazine No. 12, 1946.

The stage biographies of Glinka's operas, *Ivan Susanin* and *Ruslan and Liudmila* are told in pictorial presentation, such as portraits of the first performers, and sketches of the costumes and scenery made by outstanding Russian artists.

Glinka's music in Soviet times forms the theme illustrated in the concluding section of the exposition—here are records of performances of his operas and symphonic and chamber works before audiences of many millions in theatres, concerts, and over the air. There are numerous editions of Glinka's works published within the last thirty years, and articles and essays on his works by Soviet musical scholars.

YOUNG MUSICIANS

Every succeeding year sees the appearance on the Soviet concert platforms of new musicians of the younger generation. As a rule their performances are distinguished by a mastery of execution, matched by the depth and earnestness of their artistic style.

Constantine Simeonov is a young conductor who completed a course of study with the Leningrad Academic Choir in 1936. From the very first days of the war Simeonov volunteered for service in the Soviet Army, whence he returned to his music when demobilized in 1946. He did brilliantly at the conductors' review at Leningrad, showing temperament and profound grasp of the works he conducted. In Moscow, too, Constantine Simeonov's subsequent appearance proved a great success.

With the first strokes of his baton the passionate intensity of the execution, carried away the orchestra and the audience. On the

The Lithuanian Song and Dance Ensemble

program of the concert were Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* and Chaikovsky's *Manfred*.

The young cellist, Mstislav Rostropovich first made a name for himself at the Soviet competition for musical performers held at the end of 1945, where he was awarded the first prize.

The young musician's progress is watched with deep interest by all lovers of music. He has tried his hand at composition, too, studying the art in Vissarion Shebalin's class at the Conservatory. His *Humoresque* (performed by himself) is elegant and graceful.

LITHUANIAN ENSEMBLE

The Lithuanian ensemble gave some interesting concerts at the Chaikovsky Hall in Moscow.

The folk music of Lithuania is most colourful and original. The old, old "daine" and "sutortine" (choral songs), and the merry dances and festive round dances with song were all included in the extensive program. "Sadute" is the traditional wedding dance performed by Lithuanian girls. How smoothly they move in a ring in their colourful ancient costumes holding large red and white flowers in their hands.

The native folk music has been carefully and lovingly collected by members of the ensemble—the repertoire is to be enriched by songs and dances of Soviet Lithuania.

OPERAS FOR CHILDREN

Some interesting work in performing and popularizing opera for children is being done in the operatic studio sponsored by the Leningrad Conservatory. When the staff of the studio set up a children's musical theatre after the war, the first opera they staged was Marian Koval's *The Wolf and the Seven Kids*, written on the subject of a well-known Russian folk tale. The music, original, simple, spontaneous, has become very popular with the young folks of Leningrad. Another opera for children is *Jhanat* by Lev Schwartz, a story of the courage and friendship of Soviet children in the days of World War II. The composer, V. Vitlin, is working on *Vanya Solntsev*, a new opera after Valentin Katayev's story, *A Son of the Regiment*.

The creation of a musical theatre for children cannot fail to encourage Soviet composers in writing new operas for youthful audiences.

Still from the film
MASTERS OF THE STAGE

THE ASHUGS OF AZERBAIJAN

The "Ashugs", as the native bards of Azerbaijan are called, are beloved by their people. In their interesting song improvisations they tell of the past; of the innermost thoughts and hopes of their people, and sing their happy present life. A meet of Azerbaijan ashugs took place not very long ago at Kirovabad. Here is what the venerable seventy-two-year-old ashug, Assad Rzayev, told his assembled fellow singers:

"I have lived a long life and I have seen with my own eyes the sufferings of my people. Only Soviet power brought us happiness. It is our first task now to sing this new life, to sing of the Soviet man and his devoted labours. My songs and stories shall honestly serve the people!"

Ashug Bayamov told his audience how he had composed his song named *Our Five-Year Plan*, now widely known among the people of Azerbaijan.

CINEMA

MASTERS OF THE STAGE

One of the latest Soviet films, *Masters of the Stage*, is devoted to the Moscow Art Theatre. What Moscovite does not know the Moscow Art, and what visitor to the capital but is eager to see a performance of that famous theatre? There are millions of people, however, who have never had that opportunity, and what the new film aims at is to supply this want and preserve some of the finest samples of the theatre's mastery for generations to come. We see before us the three oldest actors of the theatre—Olga Knipper-Chekhova, Ivan Moskvin, and Vassili Kachalov. The three plays from which fragments are presented are: *Tsar Fyodor Ioannovich*, by Alexei K. Tolstoy; Anton Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*, and the *Lower Depths* by Maxim Gorky; the whole film is thus a brilliant page from the history of Russian theatrical art.

There are stills showing landmarks in the history of the Moscow Art Theatre. Rare photographs, playbills, memories of bygone years flit by on the screen. The spectator sees a portrait of Constantine Stanislavsky, the creator of the theatre—another one of Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko.

BEAUTY SPOTS OF MOSCOW ENVIRONS ON THE SCREEN

In some of the picturesque localities lying in the vicinity of Moscow interesting monuments of Russian culture, architecture and every-day life have been preserved. They are being systematically filmed by the Moscow Studio of Popular Scientific Films. Among the cinema sketches made during the war were those dealing with the ancient Cathedral of St. Basil in the Red Square in Moscow and of the majestic Novodevichi Monastery. The series is being supplemented continually. One short is devoted to the Museum Palace of Ostankino.[1] We see the wonders of the white-columned palace created by the serf architects, Pavel Argunov, Alexei Mironov and Grigori Dushkin. The walls of the palace are ornamented with exquisite designs, mouldings and delicate wood carving.

No less interesting is the film dealing with the museum in the village of Kolomenskoye[2]: a rare sample of an architectural ensemble of the 16th and 17th centuries standing on a high hill overlooking the Moskva River. The first mention of the village—then the estate of the Grand Duke of Moscow—is found in historical documents bearing the date of 1328. We see on the screen the Church of the Ascension, built in the year 1532, one of the earliest Russian architectural monuments in stone. Extremely interesting also is the Church of John the Baptist. And here is one of the first waterworks in old Russia, a tower with a barrel-shaped top. The wooden palace of Kolomenskoye was known far and wide as the "eighth wonder of the world." Towards the end of the 18th century this rare monument of Russian wood architecture was pulled down, but a model of it made some one hundred years ago, is in an excellent state of pre-

[1] See *Soviet Literature* No. 4-5, 1946.
[2] See *Soviet Literature* No. 11, 1946.

Still from the film A GEM OF THE SHORIA HIGHLANDS

servation. It is a wonderful piece of workmanship. Looking at it on the screen you get the impression of the original palace in all its unrivalled beauty.

A GEM OF THE SHORIA HIGHLANDS.

The dense, impassable taiga, high mountains, bare summits of austerely towering crags, tumultuously rushing rivers, overhanging layers of snow that seem at the point of crashing down into the valleys and abysses below. A bear, emerging from between the trunks of age-old trees—a light-footed gazelle leaping from rock to rock, a badger stirring in a heap of twigs. These are the opening shots of the new documentary film, named *A Gem of the Shoria Highlands*

It is the story of one of the new developments created under the Stalin Five-Year-Plan—the story of the new life in that outlying region in the foothills of the Altai and the Western Sayan Mountain Range. Immense deposits of iron ore have been discovered in the mountains of Shoria. Here is the portrait of the man who helped discover one such deposit. He is Mikhail Sheregeshev, a hunter and a native of these parts. One day as he was stooping down placing snarls for wood hens in the taiga, he saw a black stone lying on the ground. It was exactly like the one a geologist had once shown him. Like all prospectors in the taiga who want to mark a place he made some notches on the trunk of the nearest tree. The place was found. And it was not long before derricks were put up and a geologists' settlement sprang up near the spot marked by the hunter. It was named in his honour—Sheregesh.

RESTORATION OF CINEMA FILMS

Time lays its imprint on all things.The colours on the canvases of the old masters grow dim, the pages of ancient manuscripts assume a yellow tinge, fabrics that were firm and elastic grow frail and decayed. . . .

The cinema film is no exception to the general rule. It ages, and rather rapidly, too. For several years now there has existed a restoration laboratory under the State Cinema-Photo Institute. Its task is to preserve for posterity such Soviet films as possess particular artistic or historical interest. In the comparatively short years of its existence the laboratory has succeeded in restoring and preserving millions of metres of film. Such work is particularly important in regard to documentary films.

If the Soviet spectator can see the living likeness of Lenin moving on the screen; if fragments of old pictures can be introduced, when need arises, into a modern movie, we may be sure that no small share of credit for this achievement is due to the work of the laboratory. The Lenin stills will be preserved for many long years, to be viewed by succeeding generations. The documentary film dedicated to the eight hundredth anniversary of Moscow will be interspersed with numerous sequences from the newsreels—restored by the laboratory—showing pre-revolutionary Moscow with its horse-drawn trams, droshki, and small shops.

A. Grube, Honoured Art Worker of Belorussia, working on a statue of Yanko Kupala

ART

SCULPTORS OF BELORUSSIA

The culture and art of the Belorussian people suffered centuries of oppression and bitter trial under the yoke of the Polish nobility and Russian tsarism. Belorussia was a land of poverty; a land of hopeless want, of social and cultural slavery. It goes without saying that this was no fitting background for the development of the fine arts. All the achievements of Belorussian art are wholly the product of the Soviet epoch.

There would indeed be no exaggeration to say that the sculptural department of the Vitebsk Art Technicum between the years 1923 and 1930 was the alma mater of nearly all Belorussian sculptors. It was here that Z. Azgur, A. Glebov, A. Bembel, A. Orlov, A. Zhorov, G. Izmailov studied. The teacher and friend who guided their work throughout a number of years was the sculptor M. Kerzin, one of the best alumni of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts.

The popular sources of the young Belorussian school of sculpture reach as far back as the reign of Ivan IV, when the art of the native wood carvers was in flower. The single objects that have come down to our times are specimens of delicate artistic carving with floral ornaments of complicated design. A collection of altar doors of the 18th to the early 19th century preserved in the Vitebsk museum, polychrome

General Dovator. *By the Belorussian sculptor Z. Azgur*

crucifixes and wooden statues of the same period, household objects, ornamented with wood carving, pottery and ceramics—such are the monuments of Belorussian popular art in the past.

The continuity between the Soviet sculpture of Belorussia and the specimens of its old art is most clearly manifested in the works of A. Grube, an artist who started his career as a self-taught talent to become one of the outstanding Belorussian sculptors of his day.

Like the unknown carvers of past ages, Grube, at the outset of his career, preferred wood to any other material. He understands how to convey the manliness and mutinous spirit of the Belorussian peasant of the past century (the sculpture *Beloruss*), and presents the woman of our own day as an image imbued with the poetry of free labour (*Woman Tractor Driver*).

In the war years, when Belorussia was occupied by German troops, Grube, like many other artists was given the opportunity to work in Moscow. It was in those months that he made his statues of Lenin and Stalin whose monumental dimensions are in keeping with the breadth of conception and the bold, expressive composition.

The bas-relief is the genre of sculpture to which A. Bembel has in the main devoted his work. The young sculptor's first work was a forty-metre frieze containing nearly three hundred figures.

The highly original high-relief Bembel exhibited at the Belorussian Exposition at Moscow in 1941, dedicated to Western Belorussia, is constructed in several planes with great depth and complex foreshortenings. The sculptor is now engaged on a design for a monument to Hero of the Soviet Union Zaslonov, one of the leaders of the guerrilla movement in Belorussia.

The sculptor Z. Azgur works mostly on portraits having passed early in his career to the monumental genre in which he is undoubtedly at his best.

But even his first works among which are portrait sculptures of F. Dzerzhinsky and Gracchus Babeuf show a technique of high proficiency.

Azgur never tires in his search for the new. In his monumental portraits we see him continuously striving to break away from the old academic method toward new, hitherto unattempted solutions. In 1945, he was awarded a First Stalin Prize.

Not long before the war—after the liberation of the western areas of Belorussia some new names were added to the rolls of the country's sculptors; conspicuous among them being that of a young and talented master, N. Rappoport.

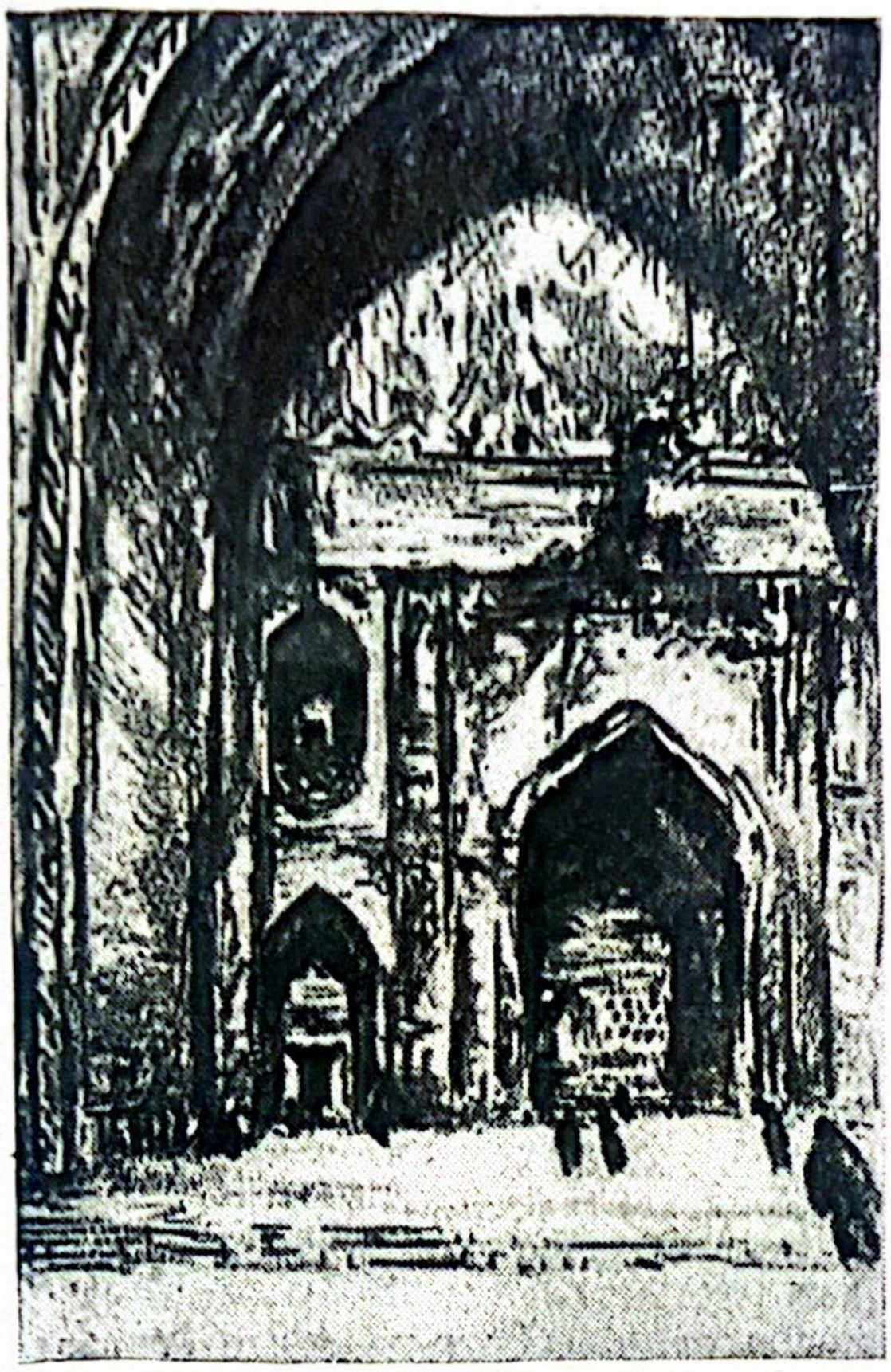
The first sculpture he began to work on in his new country was dedicated to the liberation of Western Belorussia. In passionate images he shows a people moved by the mighty spirit of brotherly solidarity, happy in the knowledge of the newly-acquired freedom. The many figures, each strong and expressive in itself, merge into a human mass of irrepressible movement. A master of group composition, N. Rappoport is also an excellent portraitist.

MASTERS OF FOLK ART

The numerous designs in the exhibition halls of the Moscow Association of Soviet Artists are arranged to show the historical development of the arts of the peoples of the Soviet Union from antiquity to our own times. As you enter the exhibition, the walls of the rooms remind you of a gigantic carpet woven in a pattern of gorgeous colours.

The spring of last year saw a number of expeditions leave Moscow for the ends of our vast country. Off they started, architects and painters, with rucksacks strapped to their shoulders and sketch books in hand,

The sculptress Vera Mukhina in her studio



Entrance to a school in Samarkand

searching far and wide for precious specimens of folk arts; decorative fabrics, objects fashioned of gold and silver, hammered or chiselled; carvings in wood and stone. Drawings were made of more than one thousand unique specimens shaped by the hands of unknown masters.

From Georgia have been brought sketches of 12th-century frescoes; of wooden furniture, and household utensils. From the Ukraine —designs for fabrics embroidered in quaint, colourful patterns. . . Every region, every national district produced some treasure eagerly sought for by the keen eye of the explorer. In these halls is deployed all the diversity of the national art of the peoples inhabiting the U.S.S.R.

VERA MUKHINA IN HER WORKSHOP

As we enter the spacious, sunlit apartment we are met by a woman with a serious look on her expressive face; her thick hair is brushed back from her brow; the eyes are intent and thoughtful. The name of Vera Mukhina, the sculptress, is known to millions of people who saw her monumental statues decorating the entrance to the Agricultural Exhibition of the U.S.S.R. at Moscow. Her works were familiar also to visitors at the International Fairs at Paris and New York. At present Vera Mukhina is working on a sculpture of Maxim Gorky, a monumental statue which will be placed on a steep bank of the Volga where the river flows past the town bearing the writer's name. Maxim Gorky is presented as a young man. He is wearing a Russian shirt and high boots. His head is proudly thrown back. He seems to be gazing far out into the boundless expanses of the majestic Volga, the glorious river which is linked with so many of his memories. The framework of the seven-metre figure consists of welded metal girders. The monument is cast in bronze. Included in the composition are three sculptures—three symbolic figures from the stories of Gorky: the proud Storm Petrel; the youth, Danko, carrying his flaming heart in his hand, and the Mother bearing aloft a waving banner.

OLD SAMARKAND

An album of autolithographs by Professor Evgeni Katonin, entitled *Old Samarkand* has been published by the Russian Academy of Arts. E. Katonin is a past master of stone etching, as we have already seen in previous works of his, a series of albums of lithographs, recording the natural scenery and ancient architectural monuments of the Crimea, and different parts of Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The twelve plates of the new album, too, bear evidence of high technical proficiency, attracting the eye by the mellowness of the tones and skillful use of black-and-white effects.

In this series the author, who during the Patriotic War was living in Central Asia, has given us views of some of the most remarkable places and buildings of the ancient city of Samarkand, now one of the large centres of the Soviet Uzbek republic; a city with whose destinies some of the great names in history are so closely bound: Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, who completely destroyed the town in the year 1220, and Timur (Tamerlane) under whose rule the whole surrounding region reached the peak of its prosperity in the 14th century. In the plates presented by Professor Katonin we see some of the marvellous edifices created by Tamerlane—the great mausoleum with its exquisite cupola and the mosque of Bibi-Khanum; the falling minaret of Registan, a madrasah of a later period and some landscapes in the typical Katonin manner.

MISCELLANEOUS

SOVIET WRITERS' SOCIAL DUTY

Soviet litterateurs are taking an active part in the public life of their country. The voice of Soviet writers sounds with great strength in the preparations for the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the republics which now hold the attention of millions of Soviet citizens.

Every Soviet republic has its own Central Election Commission. One of the names on the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation is that of the Soviet writer, Alexander Fadeyev, author of the novels *Razgrom* (Rout) and *The Young Guard*. Two pre-election centres where work is conducted day by day with the voters have been organized in the building of the Union of Soviet Writers at Moscow. These centres are comfortably appointed rooms where one can find literature bearing on every aspect of the elections, and receive information and answers to all enquiries. There is always a reliable consultant on duty, ready

to help the applicant find an answer to any question relating to the Soviet electoral system.

In the canvassing centre of Election District No. 16 (Herzen electoral area) in Moscow we can meet the writer, Lazar Lagin, while Nikolai Vaganov, the playwright, is in charge of the canvassing centre attached to Election District No. 19 of the same area. Heading the regional electoral commission of the Herzen area is the poet, Alexander Zharov. "On the territory of our electoral area," he told us, "we have more than twenty scientific research institutes; the Moscow University, the Moscow Conservatory, the Moscow Theatre of Drama, the theatre of the Cinema Actor, some big industrial enterprises, among them the famous Trekhgornaya Cotton Mill, the former citadel of the workers' revolutionary movement. Our electoral area includes forty-seven polling stations and our main aim is to guard the electoral law."

The Blue Conference Hall of the Writers Union and a spacious room adjoining it have been set aside for the use of the canvassing centre attached to Polling Station No. 19. Working on the staff here are quite a number of writers, among them, the poetess Vera Inber, the writer Anna Karavayeva, the playwright Georgi Mdivani, the writer Iracli Andronnikov, the poet Perets Markish, the playwright Isidor Shtok, the literary critic Semyon Tregub, the poet Mikhail Golodny, the writer Moris Slobodskoy, and others.

Working in the canvassing centre of Polling Station No. 16 are some forty literary people. They check up the electoral lists and talk to the voters on current political events, clarifying the election regulations. Visiting the voters in their own homes are the following writers and poets: Valeria Gerassimova, Margarita Aligher, Pavel Antokolsky, Mikhail Zenkevich, Lev Oshanin.

The Soviet writers are conducting equally intensive work throughout the other cities of the republic.

No less zealous than our writers in the activities connected with the forthcoming elections are people prominent in theatrical life, as well as painters and musicians.

The Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow—has selected one hundred and thirty-five people from among the personnel of singers and ballet artists to do canvassing work in the capital.

Five thousand five hundred and fifty free concerts for the voters have been given by the theatrical people of the Ukraine.

A series of coloured posters dealing with the elections is the work of the best artists in this field. One of the members of the Central Election Commission of the Kirghiz Soviet Republic is the painter, Gapar Aityiev.

The actor, Vladimir Tkhapsayev, is active on the Central Election Commission of the Autonomous Republic of Ossetia.

In one of the quiet streets of the capital there is a tall, many storied building—the House of the Composer—a canvassing centre run by Moscow musicians. Nadezhda Bryusova, an expert in musical folklore, sister of the outstanding poet Valeri Bryusov, is in charge.

MOSCOW METALLURGISTS' NEWSPAPER

It is now a quarter of a century since the first issue of *Martenovka*, a factory journal published by the workers of the "Hammer and Sickle" metallurgical works, appeared.

The paper began to come out immediately after the Revolution of 1917 as a hand-written wall newspaper. It grew very popular among the workers and was soon being mimeographed. On December 20, 1921, the first printed number of *Martenovka* appeared. Ten years later it could boast of a sizable circulation—six thousand copies.

The paper's pages are a record of the life of the factory in its fight for Soviet metal—steel and rolled metal. As you turn over the pages of the *Martenovka* files for a quarter of a century, you follow the changes gradually coming about in the works. Grigori Ilyin who is now manager of the enterprise came here as a common stoker. Many of the foremen whose achievements are now the pride of the factory began life here as common labourers. Under the Stalin Five-Year Plans the steel output was doubled and the total production grew to six times the original figure.

There are no professional journalists on the *Martenovka* staff; the whole thing is run by the workers. They like writing for their newspaper. Ivan Turtanov is not only an experienced steel roller, but also the author of good articles; and Kirill Chirkov besides setting records in steel-smelting writes spirited verses.

There is a literary circle connected with the paper where the efforts of beginners in the art of writing are encouraged and guided. The best compositions are printed in the literary columns of *Martenovka*. And some of the members of that circle have become professional writers.

NEW DEPARTMENT IN THE HERMITAGE

A Department of the History of Russian Culture is being opened in that depository of world art—the State Hermitage Museum at Leningrad.

Among the pieces preserved in the Hermitage are some two hundred and fifty exhibits characterizing the history of Russia from antiquity to the 19th century. There is a wonderful collection of monuments of the ancient country of Urartu; relics of the material culture of the Scythians and Sarmatians, of the Greek colonies of the Black Sea region; the Tartar Golden Horde and Central Asia. There are also large collections of ancient Russian documents, books, paintings and engravings. Among the treasures are some drafts made by the hand of Peter I; ceramics, manufactured by Mikhail Lomonosov and Dmitri Vinogradov; objects of crystal, gold, silver and precious stones; collections of medals and coins, of firearms and cold steel. The new department has organized an exhibition—The Heroic Military Past of the Russian People—which is already open in the Hall of Heraldry of the Hermitage.

Editor-in-chief: ALEXANDER KARAGANOV